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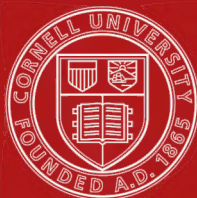
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BLACK RIVER
AND
NORTHERN NEW YORK
CONFERENCE MEMORIAL.

SECOND SERIES.

CONTAINING

SKETCHES OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE DECEASED
MEMBERS OF THE ABOVE CONFERENCES, NOT INCLUDED
IN THE FORMER WORK.

BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME, 1880.

(Written at the Request of the above Conferences.)

BY REV. P. DOUGLASS GORRIE,

*Member of the Conference, and Author of "Churches and Sects,"
"Episcopal Methodism, as It Was and Is," "Lives of
Eminent Methodist Ministers," "Black River
Conference Memorial," etc., etc.,
Member of the New England Methodist Historical Society.*

WATERTOWN, N. Y.
CHARLES E. HOLBROOK, PRINTER.
1881.

Copyrighted, 1881.

DEDICATION :

**To the Northern New York Conference of the Methodist
Episcopal Church,**

AT WHOSE REQUEST THIS WORK HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN,

*The Author begs leave to present his feeble, yet grateful
Tribute of Respect to the Memories of Departed
Worth and Moral Heroism ;*

MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE WIDOWS, ORPHANS, AND
SURVIVORS OF THE NOBLE DEAD,

Is this Volume Respectfully Inscribed,

By their Unworthy Brother,

P. DOUGLASS GORRIE.

To the Brethren of the Northern New York Conference :

I hereby submit the following pages to your "Reverend Body" in obedience to your oft-expressed wishes. To some it may not be all they desired, and to others more than they expected.

The price of the book is a trifle more than I designed, but it seemed impossible to crowd so much matter into less space, and the superior portraits that have been inserted have added largely to the cost of the work.

Both author and publisher have endeavored to make the book as perfect as possible, and the former confidently hopes that the work will be kindly received as hereby presented to the conference.

My thanks are due not only to the printer and lithographer for their carefulness in the preparation of the book, but also to all the dear brethren of the conference who have, in any manner, contributed to its pages, and cheered the author by their good wishes and encouragement.

Your Brother in the Gospel,

P. D. GORRIE.

PREFACE.

The present work was commenced years ago at the special request of the Black River Conference, and more recently it has been continued and compiled at the request of the Northern New York Conference of 1879.

In attempting to obey the behests of the conference, the author at an early date endeavored to carry out the wishes of the brethren by preparing a manuscript which brought the sketches down to the year 1862. When about ready for publication, our war with the South commenced, and the good people of the North had about all they wanted to attend to, without paying much attention to literature, or in fact anything else aside from the salvation of the Nation! This seemed to be the one great object. Thank God, the Nation was saved, although at a tremendous sacrifice of men and money.

Since the close of the war, the manuscript has lain dormant, "Lo! these many years," but, as the good brethren seemed desirous of having the work completed and published, I have within the last year taken hold of the matter again, and brought the sketches down to the year 1880. In this we have followed the advice of several judicious brethren of the conference, who thought with myself that the work would be more complete if brought down fully to the present time.

We have labored under the usual disadvantages of a scarcity of material, and especially in regard to some highly esteemed brethren who died years ago. But we have done the best we could under the circumstances, and we have, at least, given every deceased brother an *honorable mention*, of which all were truly worthy; and with all its faults and errors, we submit these "MEMORIALS" to the regard of the ministers of the conference, and to readers in general.

In the arrangement of these various Memoirs in the work, it will be noticed that we have strictly followed the date of the death of the deceased subject of the Memoir, without regard to the position, length of ministerial service, or other adventitious circumstances adhering to the life and labors of the departed brother, our only regret being that

each and all had no more worthy pen to portray the virtues that adorned their christian character.

In regard to the portraits inserted, the author is obliged to remark that they are not as numerous as could be desired ; and yet, such as I have been able to secure are well transferred to these pages by skilled artists, and I hope they will prove acceptable to all the friends of the deceased.

Appended are the Conference resolutions before referred to.

The following resolution was adopted in 1862, by the Black River Conference :

Whereas, This Conference, at a previous session, by resolution requested Rev. P. D. GORRIE to prepare a second volume of the Black River Conference Memorial, to contain sketches of the lives of our deceased brethren, not contained in the former volume ; and

Whereas, It is important that the lives and labors of our departed fellow laborers should be imbodyed in a permanent form. Therefore,

Resolved, That should Bro. GORRIE see fit to prepare and publish, as soon as practicable, the said volume, we, as members of the conference, will aid him as far as we can in the collection of materials for the work, and also in promoting the sale of the same among the people of our respective charges.

H. SHEPARD.
W. L. TISDALE.

Resolutions adopted by the Northern New York Conference of 1879,—submitted by Rev. A. E. Corse :

“Resolved 1st, That we request our brother, Rev. P. D. GORRIE, to complete his Memoirs of Deceased Brethren.

2d, That when completed, we as members of the Northern New York Conference, will give our influence to the sale of the same.”

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HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE.

BY REV. I. S. BINGHAM, D. D.

ISSUED BY PERMISSION, FROM MINUTES OF 1878.

The Black River Annual Conference was organized in Watertown, N. Y., on the 1st day of September, 1836, Bishop Beverly Waugh presiding. Wm. Ward Ninde was elected first secretary. Its lineage is traceable through the Oneida, Genesee, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore Conferences to "Methodism in the United States," and thence to that "Great Movement Called Methodism," in England in 1739. Methodist itinerants found their way into the territory covered by the Black River Conference as early as 1803. It was then included in the Philadelphia Conference, and together with Central and Western New York constituted the Genesee district. In 1805, it became the Albany District in New York Conference; in 1810, it was the Cayuga District in the Genesee Conference; in 1812, it was the Oneida District in the same conference, and in 1820, it was known as the Black River District. In 1828, the Oneida Conference was organized from the Genesee, when the St. Lawrence, Watertown and Herkimer Districts covered a large part of what, in 1836, became Black River Conference.

The division of the Oneida Conference, which resulted in the formation of the Black River Conference, was provided for by the General Conference of May, 1836, in session in Cincinnati. The division gave to the new Conference forty-seven members, of whom thirty-two were Effective Elders, six Superannuates and nine Deacons. One of the Superannuates, Samuel Bibbins, died before the new Conference was organized. It also gave thirteen probationers of the first year and seven of the second year. Every member of the second class was admitted into full connection at the first session of the Black River Conference. It consisted of James Erwin, I. L. Hunt, Ross Clark, Wm. D. Moore, Lindley D. Gibbs, John Thomas and Harvey Chapin. Of this class only three are now (1878) living, viz; James Erwin, who is an effective member of the Central New York Conference, and stationed in Cazenovia; and I. L. Hunt and W. D. Moore, who are superannuated members of the Northern N. Y. Conference.

The class continued on trial were James Irvine, Harvey E. Chapin, Truman Van Tassell, Arza J. Phelps, B. F. Brown, Burroughs Holmes, Geo. Sawyer, Isaac Covert, Samuel Lyon, Richard Lysle, O. Squire, E. B. Fuller and Lewis Bell. Of this class only three are living, viz; Arza J. Phelps and Geo. Sawyer, who are superannuated members of the Central N. Y. Conference, and Lewis Bell who has retired from the ministry.

The class ordained Elders at the first session were Hiram Shepard, A. D. Peck, both deceased, and Jesse T. Peck. Of the original effective Elders with which the Conference organized—one, Roswell Parker, located during the first session; two, Calvin Danforth and G. W. Barney, were superannuated, and two were transferred, viz: Silas Comfort to Missouri Conference, and L. C. Rogers to the Oneida Conference. Squire Chase was removed from the superannuated list and transferred to the Liberia Mission Conference, and John Dempster was appointed missionary to Buenos Ayres, S. A., and two of the deacons just ordained and admitted, viz: Ross Clark and James Erwin were placed on the superannuated list. Three elders were added by ordination at the first session, thus leaving the number of effective elders for appointment only twenty-nine, who, together with seven deacons of the first class and seven of the second class, constituted the membership of the Black River Conference at the close of its first session.

To these may be added, to make up the working force of the Conference, thirteen probationers, now of the second year, whose names are given above, and twenty probationers of the first year, viz: Loren L. Adkins, John Thompson, Albert Seymour, H. Mattison, M. Lyon, L. D. Tanner, J. W. Jones, R. Reynolds, A. Blackman, G. Fairchild, J. Downing, R. Soule, Wm. Tripp, J. E. Stoddard, H. Kinsley, D. B. Lawton, A. Castle, P. D. Gorrie, John Lowry and F. Hawkins. Of these, L. L. Adkins and M. Lyon are now members of the Central New York Conference, and A. Blackman, Wm. Tripp and P. D. Gorrie are members of the N. N. Y. Conference, all on the list of superannuates, and D. B. Lawton is an effective Elder in the Tennessee Conference.

The following is the list of appointments made by Bishop Waugh, at the first session of the Black River Conference:

HERKIMER DISTRICT.

Geo. Gary, P. E.

Herkimer Circuit—E. W. R. Allen and D. B. Lawton.

Little Falls—A. Adams.

Herkimer Station—E. Wheeler.

Russia—J. Roper and G. Fairchild.
 Steuben—I. Puffer and J. W. Jones.
 Rome—V. M. Coryell.
 Black River—R. Houghton and J. Downing.
 Vienna—E. Whipple and L. D. Tanner.
 Camden—A. Blackman.
 Williamstown—M. H. Gaylord and L. Bell.
 Canastota—H. E. Chapin.

OSWEGO DISTRICT.

I. Stone, P. E.
 Syracuse—A. D. Peck.
 New Bridge—J. G. Whitcomb.
 N. Manlius—A. Tuller and M. Lyon.
 Lysander—A. H. Tilton and R. Soule.
 Jordan—B. Phillips.
 Weedsport—C. Giles.
 Montezuma—L. L. Adkins.
 Victory—H. Mattison, one supply.
 Rose—B. Holmes, one supply.
 Oswego—W. W. Ninde.
 Fulton—Luther Lee.
 Granby—A. Seymour and S. Lyon.
 Mexicoville—Jesse Penfield.
 Mexico—I. Covert and T. Van Tassel.
 Rensselaer Oswego Academy (located at Mexico, N. Y.)—Geo.
 G. Hapgood.

BLACK RIVER DISTRICT.

G. Baker, P. E.
 Lowville—E. B. Fuller and F. Hawkins.
 Carthage Circuit.—Wm. Tripp, one supply.
 Rodman—Wm. D. Moore.
 Adams—H. Chapin.
 Sandy Creek—J. Thomas and J. Thompson.
 Mannsville—E. Smith.
 Pulaski—L. Whitcomb.
 Sackets Harbor—I. L. Hunt.
 Cape Vincent—E. Barns and A. E. Munson.
 Brownville—H. Shepard.
 Watertown—N. Salsbury.
 LeRay—J. Irvine and A. J. Phelps.
 Theresa—H. Kinsley and O. Squire.
 Watson Miss.—To be supplied.

POTSDAM DISTRICT.

J. Loveys, P. E.

Potsdam—Jesse T. Peck.

Canton Village—C. W. Leet.

Canton Circuit—H. Graves and P. D. Gorrie.

Gouverneur—R. Reynolds and J. Lowry.

Hammond—A. M. Smith and R. Lysle.

Ogdensburg—W. S. Bowdish.

Heuvelton—B. F. Brown and J. E. Stoddard,

Lisbon—A. Foreman.

Louisville—L. King and J. Wallace.

Fort Covington—G. Sawyer.

Bombay—Wm. C. Mason.

Westville and Constableville—To be supplied.

Chateaugay—L. D. Gibbs, one supply.

Malone—C. L. Dunning.

Bangor—A. Castle.

Stockholm—R. Everdell.

Hopkinton—G. C. Woodruff.

S. Comfort transferred to Missouri Conference; L. C. Rogers transferred to Oneida Conference; Squire Chase transferred to Liberia Mission Conference, Africa, and John Dempster, missionary to Buenos Ayres, South America.

During the forty-one and a half years intervening since these appointments were "read off" by Bishop Waugh, in the old stone church in Watertown, disease and death have made sad encroachments upon the list of noble men. Only twenty-one are now living, and of these only eleven were full members of the Conference at the time. Ten of the twenty-one are still members of the N. N. Y. Conference and all superannuated. Six of them are members of the Central New York Conference, all superannuate except Moses Lyon, who was a probationer of the first year, and is now in effective service and stationed at Bridgeport, N. Y. Luther Lee is a superannuate in the Detroit Conference; G. C. Woodruff is a superannuate in the Central Illinois Conference; A. M. Smith is an effective member of the Upper Iowa Conference; Jesse T. Peck is one of the bishops of the M. E. Church, still doing effective and heroic service.

The limits of the Black River Conference, as defined by the General Conference of 1836, were as follows:

"The Black River Conference, shall include that part of the State of New York west of the Troy Conference, not imbraced in the

Genesee Conference, as far south as the Erie Canal, and all the societies on the immediate banks of said canal, except Utica."

The General Conference of 1840, "excepted" the society of Canastota, and in 1844 the societies of Montezuma and Port Byron were likewise excepted, all being placed in the Oneida Conference. No further change of boundaries was made until 1868, when four districts, embracing about three-fifths of the Conference, were cut off and joined to about two-thirds of the Oneida Conference to make the Central New York Conference, leaving the Black River Conference entirely within the counties of Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence and Franklin. Against this dismemberment the whole conference remonstrated, and sent to the General Conference of 1872 a protest signed by every member of the conference present at the session of April, 1872, with a petition for the restoration of the former boundaries. The prayer of the conference was answered, and the original boundary was restored. Before the close of the session, a compromise was agreed upon between the representatives of the two conferences by which the base line of the Black River Conference was removed from the Erie Canal, and so changed as to give that portion of Oneida and Herkimer Counties lying south of the Erie Canal, with a portion of Madison lying on and East of the Midland railroad, together with a few societies in Montgomery, Otsego and Schoharie Counties to the Black River Conference, and also to give all of Onondaga and Cayuga Counties, with a portion of Wayne Co., lying north of the canal, together with Phoenix, in Oswego Co., to the Central New York Conference. These changes were regarded as equitable by the General Conference, and were approved; but by the change the Black River Conference lost the growth and increase of members for the intervening four years. At the same time the name "Black River" was changed to "Northern New York." In 1877, by a commission the following charges, viz: Sharon Springs, Ames, Sprout Brook, and Frey's Bush, were set off to the Troy Conference.

Although the Black River Conference was organized in 1836, it was not incorporated until 1841. At the session held in Pulaski, in July, 1840, measures were taken to procure a charter from the Legislature of the State. Application was duly made, and on the 17th of April, 1841, a charter was granted under the name and title of "The Trustees of the Funds of Black River Annual Conference." This "body, corporate and politic," consisted of seven trustees, who had been nominated by the conference, to wit: Geo. Gary, John Dempster, Nathaniel Salisbury, Wm. S. Bowdish, Gardner Baker, Isaac Stone, and Lewis Whitcomb. At the first meeting of this board after

its incorporation, held in Rome, in 1841, it was organized by appointing Geo. Gary, President, Wm. S. Bowdish, Secretary and G. Baker, Treasurer. Of this list not one remains with us. The honored name of Gardner Baker is found in the board of trustees from first to the last, and he only ceased to be a part of the Conference corporation when the Lord took him.

After the re-adjustment of the Conference boundaries, in 1872, and the change of name, it became necessary to procure a new charter. Application was duly made to the Legislature, and on the 10th of April, 1873, an act of incorporation was passed under the title of "The Trustees of the Northern New York Conference." The new corporation consisted of seven trustees, to wit: Isaac S. Bingham, Thos. Richey, Eli C. Bruce, Darius Simons, Peter D. Gorrie, Gardner Baker, and Isaac L. Hunt. The trustees of the Northern New York Conference were made the legal successors to all the rights of the "Trustees of the Funds of the Black River Annual Conference" as to legacies, devises, bequests and donations "that have been or may be."

President, G. Baker; Secretary, I. S. Bingham; Treasurer, Thomas Richey.

The new charter confers larger powers upon the corporation, allowing it to hold more funds, and also to "buy, sell and convey" real estate and other property. The funds now held by the trustees amount to about \$7,000, all of which is well invested and productive.

It will be noticed by the reader that since the above was written in 1878, death has been thinning our ranks largely, during the interim, so that of the original appointments made at the first session of the Black River Conference in 1836, but seven names appear on the Conference List of 1880, namely, A. Blackman, Wm. Tripp, W. D. Moore, I. L. Hunt, A. E. Munson, O. Squire. P. D. Gorrie, all superannuates.

BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE MEMORIAL.

SERIES SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

REV. ISAAC PUFFER.*

THIS venerable, and in many respects eminent, minister of the gospel was born on the 20th day of June, 1784, in Westminster, Worcester County, Mass. When he was five years of age, his father removed to Otsego County, New York, and subsequently to Canajoharie, Montgomery County, and finally to the town of Watson, Lewis County, in the same state. While residing in Otsego County his parents both became the subjects of the converting grace of God, and from all we can learn were ever after faithful till called from their home and family in Watson to the inheritance provided for them in heaven. At the age of fifteen, Isaac also experienced religion and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, to which his parents also belonged, and of which they were worthy members. His own account of the wonderful change, which affected not only his heart but shaped his destiny for the future, we will give in his own words :

“In 1802, the Itinerant Methodists, like John the Baptist, came preaching in the wilderness repentance, and that

* Mrs. Eliza McGovern and Mrs. Mary S. Brown, of Watson, Lewis County, N. Y., surviving daughters of Rev. I. Puffer, are entitled to the author's acknowledgements for the timely and full information furnished by them for this memoir.

men should bring forth fruits meet for it. (Mat. 3-8.) I was then in my fifteenth year. From the first that I heard Rev. James Covel, Jonathan Newman and many others, then being but eight years old, I resolved to be a Christian, and often prayed to the Lord to make me one. But my father removed to Canajoharie, where we were for several years deprived of Methodist preaching; and as a minister of another order informed me afterwards, it was more than he could do to inform the sinner what he could do to become converted; therefore I could not learn from all I heard what the sinner must do to be saved. But I read the Bible and Wesley's sermons on Justification by faith alone, which gave me great light. St. Paul says of Abel: 'And by it he being dead yet speaketh,' (Heb. 11-12,) and by the grace of God in my fifteenth year I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and all condemnation removed. I learned from 1st John 4-7: 'For love is of God, and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God!' When Barzilai Willey first came among us, (1802,) forming the Black River Circuit, the first Society ever formed in Lowville, about three miles from where we lived, I gave them my name when there were but twelve of us for many miles, and in America but 358 traveling preachers and 86,734 members."

Some time after joining the M. E. Church he received an injury by the falling of a tree, which circumstance is referred to in another part of this memoir. The year after this occurrence he says: "I obtained license to preach," but we have failed in learning the exact date of his first license. He probably preached some years as a local preacher before joining the conference. In 1809, he was received on trial by the New York Conference,—a year remarkable for the number of young men who were received on trial, and who, like Puffer, subsequently became able, successful and eminent divines. Among these, we notice the names of Wm. Young, Wm. Winans, Wm. Capers, Beverly Waugh,

Stephen Martindale, Loring Grant, Joseph Gatchel, Marvin Richardson, Coles Carpenter and George Gary.

Bro. Puffer having been received on trial was appointed to Otsego Circuit in the Cayuga District, Rev. Peter Van-nest being his Presiding Elder and Rev. Daniel Dunham the senior preacher. He had over two hundred miles to travel and from thirty to forty sermons to preach in going around this four weeks' circuit.

In 1810, the Genesee Conference held its first session, having been separated from the New York Conference, and as the charge on which Bro. Puffer labored was within the bounds of the former, he of course became a probationer in the Genesee Conference. Speaking of its first session, he remarks: "Our first Annual Conference was held in Lyons, Ontario County, and we were well provided for in Esquire Dorse's corn house. Our conference then included all Canada. This side of that province we had but twenty circuits." At this conference he received his appointment to Northumberland Circuit, with Abraham Dawson as preacher in charge. At the conference of 1811, he was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon. The field of labor assigned him being St. Lawrence Circuit, which was included in the Cayuga District, Rev. Wm. Case being the Presiding Elder. St. Lawrence Circuit embraced all the territory between Black River and the northern boundary of the State of New York, being about one hundred and twenty miles in length, and extending in width from the river St. Lawrence to the unbroken wilderness on the south of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties. Being alone on the circuit, which was entirely new, and which appears this year for the first time on the minutes, he could do but little more than go from town to town and from one settlement to another, preaching Christ as he went. Nor were his labors in vain; through his instrumentality many of the inhabitants of Canton, Potsdam, and other towns in St. Lawrence County, were converted to

God during the stay of Bro. Puffer on this charge. Among others who were thus brought to a knowledge of the truth was Hugh Montgomery, of South Canton, of whom the Rev. Elijah Smead, long a near neighbor of his, writes: "Bro. Montgomery was one of the first settlers of St. Lawrence County. His name stands connected with the earnest efforts of the M. E. Church in this region, to spread scriptural holiness and save sinners. He was of the salt of the earth—he was converted and he knew the fact—he was a Methodist and he knew why he was such. For many years his house was the welcome home of the weary itinerant, and his pecuniary means were cheerfully and liberally given to carry forward the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom and of the Church of his choice. He began the world with little or nothing, and was prospered in gaining a competence of the good things of this life."

The author, who found a welcome home in the family of Bro. Montgomery, during the first year of his ministry, in 1836, has often heard him say, that when he first opened his house for the entertainment of Methodist preachers and others, many of his neighbors told him that the Methodists would eat him out of house and home—they would in fact ruin him, but he would add, while relating these things, and while joy and gratitude beamed in his countenance, "All I ever gave to the preachers and to the cause of Methodism, I put out at compound interest, and God has rewarded me double."

But to return to the language of Brother Smead: "He lived to see his children grow up as olive plants around his table, and to realize many of the blessings promised to the families that call on the name of the Lord. He was extensively known in the church and in the county, as he was in the habit of attending quarterly meetings at different and distant points, and would often on such occasions exhort the brethren and others with great strength and power to hold on their way and meet him in heaven. He was a sub-

scriber to the first paper published by the M. E. Church, and had on file when he died in July, 1859, all the numbers of that paper up to that time. His piety was deep, constant, practical and even; and for more than forty years he stood at his post as class-leader, steward, and sometimes as Sunday School Superintendent and teacher." The Sabbath previous to his death he went to the "Brick Chapel," where he so long had worshipped with the people of God, and soon after service commenced, during a momentary pause in the exercises, he rose, his limbs being palsied and his whole system enfeebled by disease, and remarked to the congregation: "I have not come here to disturb, but to bid you all farewell!" And in language full of pathos exhorted all to meet him in heaven. The scene was one of moral sublimity, and its description impossible. Suffice it to say, the good man returned to his home and before the return of another earthly Sabbath, with accents of praise on his lips, and the declaration that all was clear and bright, he passed away to meet his friend Puffer in that healthful state where the inhabitants will no more say "I am sick." His beloved and pious companion followed her husband to the spirit world about two years and a half subsequently to his decease.

The reader will readily pardon this tribute to the memory of a good man, who, although not a preacher, was so closely identified with the prosperity of Methodism, from the time of Bro. Puffer's early labors to the time of his death, and who lived long enough to see the seed planted in 1811-12, grow up to be a mighty tree. Did space allow we would mention many other cases within the county of St. Lawrence, and especially in the towns of Canton and Potsdam, who were the subjects of converting grace under the labors of Isaac Puffer.

At the Conference of 1813, Bro. Puffer was ordained elder in the church of God and appointed to the charge of Black River Circuit, with Goodwin Stoddard as junior preacher. In 1814, he took charge of Sandy Creek Circuit,

having Mathew Dodson for his colleague. In 1815 we find him stationed on Western Circuit, in Oneida County, the following year on Litchfield Circuit, and in 1817, he was sent to Augusta Circuit, in Upper Canada. At the close of this year he was stationed on the Bay of Quinte Circuit, where he remained two years and then went to Niagara, in Upper Canada, where he also remained two years. Having thus spent five years of his ministerial life in preaching the gospel to those beyond the St. Lawrence, he, at the conference of 1822, received an appointment to Ridgeway, N. Y., to which he was returned the following year. In 1824-5, he labored on Bloomfield Circuit, and in 1826, he returned to Black River Circuit, where he had previously labored and where he now remained two years, having during the second year for his colleague Rev. Isaac Stone, of precious memory. In 1828, we find his name attached to Fabius Circuit. This year the Oneida Conference was formed, and Bro. Puffer became identified with that body of ministers; and the following year, at its first session, he was appointed to the charge of Pompey Circuit, where he remained one year and then received an appointment to Marcellus, in Onondaga County. In 1831, he was stationed at Cayuga, the next year at Scipio, and the year following at Herkimer, having Reverends Harvey Chapin and B. Mason for his colleagues. In 1834, in connection with Rev. Wm. Roper, he traveled Westmoreland Circuit; 1835, Steuben, to which he was returned the following year.

In 1836, the Black River Conference was formed, so mightily did the word of God grow and multiply. Bro. Puffer, from location as well as from choice, became a member of that body, and at its first session held in Watertown, he took his place among his brethren, and at its close joyfully returned to his field of labor. In 1837, he was appointed to Vienna charge, and 1838, for the third time was returned to Black River. The following year, 1839, he was appointed to the Watson Mission, the home of his boyhood,

and the residence of his family connections. On this charge he remained three years, the latter as a supernumerary, and the following year, 1842, he was appointed to Copenhagen Circuit, Silas Slater being preacher in charge. The design of giving him a subordinate position as second preacher was to relieve him in part of the cares and responsibilities of a charge and thus enable him to recruit his health, which for some years had been impaired. In 1843, we find him at his post again as preacher in charge of Ellisburgh Circuit, having Rev. W. A. Nichols for his fellow laborer. His health, however, remaining poor he was at the following conference advised to take a superannuated relation, which relation he sustained for ten years until the time of his death.

We have thus hastily glanced at the various and extensive fields of labor cultivated by our good "Father Puffer." We have followed him to the year of his superannuation, but though superannuated he is by no means idle, not even does he rest. Idleness to him would have been worse than death, and for him there was no rest but in activity. Blessed with an iron constitution, though his body began to feel the effects of old age, and his mental powers were more or less in sympathy with his physical nature, yet in zeal, in energy, in a desire to labor to win souls to Christ, there was no abatement. The result was that instead of sitting down in his easy chair in his own home, and feasting on the memories of the past, we follow him from one place to another, from city to city, from town to town and from state to state, everywhere preaching and everywhere holding in the most profound attention the large congregations that he always collected together. Indeed, so much and so constantly did he labor in assisting in protracted meetings, in the City of New York and other places, and such his power of endurance, that the remark was frequently made by his friends that if Father Puffer was a fair specimen of the superannuated preachers of the Black River Conference, they wondered what their effective men must be!

In further describing the labors and character of Father Puffer, we shall avail ourselves of the account given of him by his old friend and fellow laborer, Rev. Gardner Baker. Speaking of the rapid growth and spread of Methodism within the bounds of the old Genesee Conference, Bro. Baker remarks: "To this rapid spread and growth of Methodism in Western and Northern New York, few men, if any, contributed more largely than the subject of this notice. For more than forty years he neither sought nor enjoyed any relaxation of the toils of an active itinerant life. He threaded forest paths, forded streams, plunged through snow drifts, and boldly faced the pelting storm. He preached in all sorts of places, when he could obtain hearers to listen to his message. Sometimes after traveling weary miles and preaching in a log school house, dwelling house or barn, he would retire to rest on his pallet of straw, or the soft side of a bass wood slab, and fall asleep while counting the stars through the chinks of the frail tenement; and in the morning, perhaps, crawl out from beneath a bank of snow that had accumulated on his bed during the night. This is no overdrawn picture. There are a few of the fathers still living, a lingering remnant of a departing race of pioneer veterans, who can from their own recollections of the times that tried men's souls (and women's too), fully justify what we have written.

"Father Puffer was blessed with a physical organization well adapted to the toils and privations of his calling. His chest was broad, his limbs muscular, and his whole frame seemed to be made for strength and endurance. In the performance of his duties as a traveling preacher, he seldom made his personal ease or comfort a consideration. The energy of his will was equal to his powers of endurance. It is generally conceded that he traveled more miles and preached more sermons than any other stationed or circuit preacher within the limits of the original Genesee Confer-

ence. Though he greatly increased the number of appointments on his circuits, and often extended his labors in every direction, far beyond its limits, he was seldom known to disappoint a congregation. Twenty-seven or twenty-eight years ago, when the writer was on the Le Ray and Watertown Circuit, and Father Puffer had charge of the Black River Circuit, the latter made several visits to Watertown for the purpose of preaching. On one of these occasions he remarked that his circuit was entirely too small for him, and that with the consent of his neighbors he had extended it so as to take in Watertown and Utica as the two extremes.

“The division of the work into stations and small circuits was a source of grief and anxiety to Father Puffer during the latter years of his life. He not only felt a great inconvenience to himself personally, but he feared that it would ultimately destroy the itinerancy and bring about the substitution of congregationalism in its stead. He was an ardent lover of Methodism and he sincerely believed that as the church owed her unprecedented prosperity mainly to the wisdom of her plans of operation, so any abandonment or perversion of those plans, so as to render them practically inefficient, must be destructive of her prosperity. He thought he saw in the division of circuits, and particularly in the formation of stations, a principle at work which, unless timely checked, would at no distant day put a period to the progress of Methodism and lay her glory in the dust. How far those fears were well founded is a question which will be decided differently by different minds. The standpoint from which we make our observations, together with our education and early habits, doubtless have much to do with the determination of our judgments in the case. If large circuits are essential to the vitality of the system, then, doubtless, there is much ground for fear. But if the vital principle of the system consists in a frequent change of pastors, while the number of miles comprehended in the

circuit is a mere circumstance which may be varied to suit occasions and meet the wants of the people, then the case is different. Neither the acts of the General Conference nor the practices of the bishops give any indications of relaxation at this point. However the subject may be viewed by others, to the mind of Father Puffer the evil was present and the danger imminent.

“The practice of speaking of the venerable men who preceded us in the ministry as of the ‘old school,’ or as ‘old fashioned Methodist preachers,’ is of questionable propriety. Especially should those terms be avoided if intended to imply any disparagement of their sons in the gospel. Times have changed, and the circumstances in which the present race of Methodist ministers in this country are placed differ widely from those in which our fathers were placed. But these changes do not necessarily involve a decline in any of the essential elements of a true and successful gospel ministry. We are not of those who think the glory has departed from our Israel because the fathers have fallen asleep. The mantles of our ascended Elijahs, have fallen on the shoulders of our Elishas. Nobly did those men of God bear themselves in the field of contest against error and sin; and as they gloriously fell at their post, their sons in the gospel caught the falling banner, and still it waves for God and truth. But if it be allowable in any case to use these terms in reference to any man, it doubtless is in this case. Father Puffer was in every good sense an old fashioned Methodist preacher. His style of preaching was peculiarly his own. Without the least attempt at embellishment, and usually without a formal introduction, he proceeded at once in a plain matter-of-fact way to the discussion of his subject. The perfect artlessness of his manner, together with the strong vein of common sense which characterized his discourses, seldom failed to secure the fixed attention of his audience. His voice was peculiarly attractive, without being musical. His style of

elocution was not formed according to the rules of art, but indicated a mind wholly employed with ideas, while it gave little thought to the dress in which they were clothed. He was in the common sense of the term a doctrinal preacher, but was at the same time both spiritual and practical. Though often employed on controversial subjects, he never seemed to lose sight of the great end of preaching—namely, the salvation of souls. In this he differed from some who are called doctrinal preachers. His manner of exposing error and defending the truth, according to his understanding of the word of God, seldom failed to convey to the minds of his hearers the conviction that his only object was to do them good. He would himself become deeply affected, while God would seal the truth by pouring out his spirit upon the people, causing sinners to tremble, and saints to shout aloud for joy. The most striking peculiarity in Father Puffer's preaching was the facility with which he quoted proof texts, giving at the same time both chapter and verse. It has been stated by those who were curious enough to keep tally while listening to his sermons that it was not uncommon for him to quote in this manner from one hundred to two hundred texts in a single discourse. His extraordinary power as a textualist induced many people to believe that if the Bible were blotted out of existence, it could be reproduced whole and entire from the simple storehouse of his memory.*

“Apparent accidents, unimportant in themselves, by giving a new direction and impetus to our thoughts, often lead to important results. An incident of this kind occurred

*The author, at a certain time, listening to a sermon from Father Puffer, determined at the beginning to keep count of his scriptural quotations. His subject was Gospel Salvation in opposition to Calvinism and Universalism. On the old man went, piling up proof text on proof text, until having reached the number of one hundred and forty-two, quoted *verbatim*, with book, chapter and verse, I, becoming deeply interested in one thrilling passage, lost my count, and gave up my task as hopeless for that time at least.

in the early history of the subject of this sketch. I will relate it in his own words: 'When I was twenty, by the accidental falling of a tree the wrong way, a limb of it knocked me down and broke the bone of my leg. I sat down and held the broken bones together. The man who felled the tree came up and found me smiling. I then thought I should have nothing to do but read the Bible, which, through the divine goodness, has proved a great blessing to me in preaching the word of life. My memory being pretty good, and having my heart in the work greatly improved it, and as I had neither concordance, quotation bible, nor commentary, by hard reading I formed my own, having one portion of the holy scriptures explain another; and I never found any other so clear. Hence, I have adopted this commentary in all my preaching, for forty-one years, which has given me the honorable name of 'Chapter and Verse.'

"In 1843, (1844, author), Father Puffer being somewhat indisposed, and desiring to give a wider range to the exercise of his ministry, was placed by the Black River Conference on the superannuated list. But this circumstance, so far from diminishing, greatly increased his labors. In a letter to the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, in 1846, he says: 'Since the conference has granted me a superannuated relation, and I have been placed above the necessity of bodily labor, I have been able to preach about thirty times per month.' From 1843 (1844) to 1848, he spent the time mainly in visiting his old fields of labor, attending camp meetings, conferences, and assisting at protracted meetings whenever there was an open door, and he believed he could be useful to the people. During this period he also visited several of the principal cities East and South. He spent some time in New York, Baltimore and Washington, exercising his ministry with his usual zeal and energy. Having long indulged a wish to spend some time in the Western states of the Union, on the 15th of September, 1848, he set

his face toward the setting sun. From this time till he exchanged earth for heaven he exercised his ministry west of the Alleghanies, chiefly in Wisconsin and Illinois. From Wisconsin he writes to the *Western Christian Advocate* as follows: 'If God spares my life to behold the 20th of June next, I shall have seen sixty-seven years, and forty-two years of my life have been spent in the itineracy, seven years as a single man, receiving but eighty dollars annually, and thirty-four I moved from circuit to circuit. My brethren of the Black River Conference kindly granted my wish for a superannuation, and I have been placed, as you have already heard, on the list of those holding such a relation. Not feeling my conscience clear in spending my time in secular employment, I resolved to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. And for five years past, instead of traveling on horseback, as in youth, and being confined to small circuits, I have been riding in cars and steamboats, through Canada, and the Southern and Western states, visiting the chief cities, Washington, Baltimore, and numberless other places, in the most of which 'I have been in labors more abundant, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.' (I Cor. 15, 10.) Do not suppose I have outlabored all others, but few have labored more. During my itineracy, I have traveled over one hundred thousand miles, and preached over twelve thousand sermons, and still am able to preach from eight to ten times a week, besides writing hundreds of letters yearly. And last of all, I am addressing you, and if the Lord will, I am hoping, before I go hence, to be able to preach the gospel to you who are in Ohio also.' "

The reader, and especially Rev. G. Baker, were he now living, would readily pardon these lengthy and highly interesting extracts, made ready to our hand, as they portray in more graphic language than any we could employ, the true character of the subject of this memoir—this heroic and indefatigable christian soldier. As a further elucidation of

his zeal and piety, we will transcribe to our pages two letters written by him in the West to the Bishop and members of the Black River Conference, the first directed to Rev. James Erwin, and the other to James Erwin and George Gary.

“DAYSVILLE, Ogle County, Ills., June 11, 1852.

DEAR BRETHREN :

The year past I have traveled where few others had been except our missionaries, among the savage tribes, endeavoring to assist our young preachers when they greatly needed help, and were but poorly supported, as times were very hard, and money scarce, as the wheat crops have mostly failed in Wisconsin, so that they (the people) had little to spare. Their wheat was their principle dependence for cash. It was a trying year with the most of them, merely for want of cash, but provisions were plenty and cheap, and better still, the Lord has greatly favored us at the protracted meetings,—especially in Illinois, many have turned unto the Lord. Through the divine goodness, I have a good home near Daysville, Ogle Co., Ill., and I never had a better friend than my dear partner. * * * * She advises me to be more careful of my health, which advice is of service to me, yet I could not endure to give up itinerating. Last week, as I often do, I rode out fifteen miles, preached five times, and returned in three days. The winters agree with my health much better than when in the deep snows down East. * * * I leave my case with the good friends of the conference, feeling grateful for past favors, believing that I am much more needed here to preach and write, than among you, and am sorry that I could not well leave and bear the expense of visiting the conference this year; but if the Lord will, I hope to meet you next year.

I remain your affectionate brother and fellow laborer in the itinerancy.

ISAAC PUFFER.”

Father Puffer, notwithstanding his strong desire to attend another session of his own conference, when the year had rolled round, found himself, from increased bodily infirmity, unable to be present. Accordingly he addressed his annual epistle to the conference under date of May 23d, 1853, in these words :

“DEAR BRETHREN :

Through the divine goodness I have been preserved during the past year. Since last January I have been somewhat afflicted with rheumatism in my right leg and hip, which gave me some pain, at times depriving me of hours of rest in the night, so that I preached but little, save on Sabbaths. I sometimes feared that as my flesh pined away and I was becoming weaker, the mind also affected with the body, that I should preach but little more. But I was favored with a good home and my dear partner in life felt much for me, took care of me, and afforded me all the aid she well could. I tried to look to the Lord for supporting grace, still trusting in him as my only help and shield ; and in his great mercy he has again favored me both spiritually and temporally. As spring returned, my health became better, so that I spent four weeks in a protracted meeting rejoicing in the Lord. Since that season, although I am yet weak and not able to go to the conference, I have preached twice on each Sabbath, traveling several miles. Eight years since, I was afflicted in much the same way. A blister then helped me and I may again by the goodness of the Lord recover ; and if the Lord will, I greatly desire again to visit your conference, where I have taken so much comfort and received so many favors, and never saw a more kind hearted people toward each other in all the trying times that we have passed through. The Lord has been good to me, I entered the itineracy in 1809, and never has sickness detained me from conference before.

“We know not what we may be called to pass through. We live on the farm belonging to my wife and her children.

* * * I have built a small house in Chicago, and still own my prairie lot in Wisconsin, where my oldest son lives. Three of my children are in Watson, near Lowville, and thus you see we are scattered. * * * I can do little more than preach, and still believe that duty called me to the far West, where through the preaching of the word we see much good done. There is still great want of more preachers, but if the Lord sees fit to restore my health, I believe it would be duty to visit you again.

“Thus, brethren, I have once more addressed you, and request an interest in your prayers that we may meet in heaven, if not in this lower world, which is my greatest desire and full determination to do by the grace of God. And if

I never meet the good friends again, you may say to them all, that in my sickness, the nearer death appeared to me, the more glorious the doctrine of Romans, 5, 1: 'Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Although we are said to be 'justified by faith,' because that is the instrument by which pardon and peace came, yet, like the empty hand of the diseased paralytic, it contains nothing, and nothing is asked but to believe; nevertheless, as virtue came through it, Christ said: 'Thy faith hath made thee whole,' (Mat. 9, 22,) and in this sense he said to the woman: 'Thy sins are forgiven thee; thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace and sin no more.' (Luke 7, 49, 50.)

Bid all farewell! I still remain your affectionate brother in the gospel of Christ.

ISAAC PUFFER."

Accompanying this last letter of Father Puffer to the Black River Conference, was a certificate of the preacher in charge of the circuit, where the aged patriarch resided at the time:

"LIGHT HOUSE POINT CIRCUIT, }
ROCK RIVER CONFERENCE. }

To the Members of the Black River Conference,—Dear Fathers and Brethren:

The Rev. Isaac Puffer of your conference is living within the bounds of my charge. He is still the same laborious fruitful minister of the gospel that he was when in your midst, as far as his health will permit.

"He has been quite feeble during the past winter. With the opening spring his health has so far improved as to enable him to labor for four weeks in a protracted meeting where a number were converted.

"We rejoice that he is spared to labor where the harvest is so great and the laborers so few, and hope that he may still be spared long as a blessing to the church and the world. He has a wife with two sons, one aged twenty and the other twelve years.

Yours Fraternally,

May 17, 1853.

M. DECKER."

Reference is made in the foregoing letters to the very

excellent and pious lady who cheered the declining months and administered to the wants of Father Puffer in his illness. She was his second wife, and previous to her marriage to him was extensively known as the widow Lucinda Brown, of Chicago, who possessed some property in her own right and that of her children, by her former husband. His first wife was Miss Susan Pierce, of Rome, N. Y., to whom he was married in the year 1815. She was truly a co-laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, and died in March, 1845, having shared with him the toils of an itinerant life for thirty years. The following notice of her death was written soon after by Rev. Harvey E. Chapin, M. D. We give it entire as a tribute of respect to departed worth:

“Died: March 11th, 1845, in Watson, Lewis County, New York, Susan, wife of Rev. Isaac Puffer, of the Black River Conference, in the 54th year of her age.

“Sister Puffer’s maiden name was Pierce. She was born in Cobleskill, Schoharie County, New York, from which place, with her parents, when quite young she removed to Rome, Oneida County. There, when nineteen years of age, under the labors of Rev. J. R. Osborne, pastor of the Congregational church in that place, she was awakened and brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. At the age of twenty-four, she gave herself in marriage to Rev. Isaac Puffer, with whom she cheerfully endured all the privations and toil of an itinerant life. Sister Puffer was a woman of no ordinary worth. She early became convinced that it was the Christian’s privilege and duty to secure holiness. She sought after it, she lived it—she gave good evidence that she enjoyed it. No person could be in her society without being sensible of the presence of a devoted child of God. Never, unless imperative necessity demanded her husband’s presence at home, would she consent to have him detained from his ministerial duties.

“The anxiety of her heart for the salvation of the rising generation, led her to take a deep interest in Sabbath Schools and other benevolent institutions. In the social circle she seldom if ever neglected to make religion the most prominent topic of conversation. The old, the young, the

rich, the poor, the haughty and the meek, shared alike in her religious influence. Though her mind was pressed with anxiety for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, her zeal was accompanied with a modest demeanor and gentleness of spirit which seldom failed to secure the attention and respect of all she had intercourse with.

"Her disease was pulmonary consumption. By reason of great prostration of the physical system, there were times during her sickness that her realization of the divine presence was not so full and clear as formerly, yet there was no period in which she could not say with much assurance, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' But whenever her strength revived, so as to permit the effort of her ardent soul, her faith uniformly brought a clear witness of perfect love. The night on which her spirit took its leave of this dying world, she said to her husband, 'I think I shall die to-night,' and though weak in body and voiceless with exertion, she knelt by her bed-side and prayed; after which she arose, laid down to rest and clapped her hands while she whispered the praise of God. In a few short hours, and giving but a moments warning, her soul stepped into the heavenly chariot and left the world."

And thus died the companion of the old pilgrim, leaving him alone for years to buffet with the storms of life. And while reflecting upon the excellence of her character, her ardent piety, her consistent zeal, her constant devotion to the cause of her Master, her ready sacrifice of ease and comfort for the toil and annoyances of a wandering life, we can but magnify the grace of God which thus qualified her for the work before her. How much Father Puffer was indebted to her for some of his more excellent traits of character, no one can tell. Much, very much, depends upon the wife and mother, whether a minister's calling shall be successful or otherwise, whether she shall be a help or a snare, whether his children in his absence shall be "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," or whether they shall become vagabonds, wandering up and down the earth.

"He that findeth a wife, findeth a great thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord," becomes emphatically a truth

when applied to a minister of the gospel—such a wife was Mrs. Susan Puffer.

It will be evident from the letters before given that our aged brother, though raised above want in the last years of his pilgrimage, was not content unless blowing the gospel trumpet. His whole soul was absorbed in the one great work of preaching Christ and him crucified. In the ensuing autumn he again assists in a protracted meeting. His arduous labors and necessary exposures renewed the attack of rheumatism which confined him to the house the greater portion of the following winter. In March, 1854, he writes to his friends in Lewis County, New York: "I feel little rheumatism compared with what I have suffered. But I am extremely weak; I have been unable to rise from my bed and am now quite emaciated. But it is truly of God's favor that I am as well as I am; and I hope we may again meet in this world. I have been long since and am still assured that there is a God in heaven who can alleviate all our sufferings and grant us consolation and comfort in every hour of trial and affliction. I have reason to be thankful and put my trust in him still. I have probably seen my best days, and feel that the most important part of all is to gain heaven. I never felt more than now this desire. While contemplating this great and important subject, everything else dwindles into insignificance. I have sometimes thought were it not for my relatives and the hope of being of some little use to others, I would wish soon to gain that rest that remains to the people of God. We have this same promise that all things work together for good to them that love God, and if we but make a good use of our present afflictions, the Lord can overrule all for our eternal good and his glory."

Two weeks later than the date of the above letter, he was able to attend a quarterly meeting in the vicinity of his residence. In the Love Feast, he spoke feelingly and tenderly in reference to the completion of his work on

earth. He thought it was finished. Subsequent to this meeting his strength gradually declined, until death seemed very near him. His physician did not despair of his recovery but to him it appeared humanly impossible that he should recover. "To me," he remarked, "it would seem like a miracle, I am like a worn out vehicle in which every part is ready to fall to pieces." A day or two previous to his decease, his illness became alarming, as he was greatly prostrated, and was evidently drawing near to the bank of the river of death. A brother minister called on him, prayed with him, and cheered him in his dying hours with the consolations of that same gospel with which the dying patriarch had so often cheered others in similar circumstances. He replied in answer to a question asked him: "I have done with this world, and my trust is in God!" During his last hours he sank into a state of seeming unconsciousness and at eight o'clock in the morning of May 25th, 1854, he crossed the river, and no doubt safely landed on the heavenly shore. His funeral services were attended on the 11th day of June following, the sermon being preached by the Rev. Jesse Penfield, a superannuated member of the Black River Conference, and long a friend and fellow laborer of the deceased.

Thus died all that was mortal of Isaac Puffer, and thus while God buries his workmen the work still goes on. Elijah's mantle falls on younger shoulders, and hosts of Elishas spring forward to fill the gap made in the ranks of Christ's soldiers.

The task of summing up the character of Father Puffer is by no means a distasteful one. Like preaching a funeral sermon, it is always pleasant to be able to say, "A good man has died," and although sorrow may be mingled with pleasure in the cup, yet the fact that another has escaped to the sky and gone to Immanuel's breast is so cheering that we forget grief, dry our tears, and return thanks to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a man, Isaac Puffer partook of the common and unavoidable infirmities of man's nature ; he no doubt had his faults, better known to, and more lamented by himself than others. "But," as his friend Rev. G. Baker justly and feelingly remarked, "in uprightness of intention, and kindness of heart, he was a model of excellence. He seemed incapable of the performance of a dishonorable or unkind act himself, and was slow to impute those faults to others."

As a husband, he was proverbially kind and affectionate ; as a parent, tender and indulgent. As a minister of the gospel, he adorned his profession from beginning to end, by a holy life and a godly conversation. He dearly loved the church of his early choice, and was greatly endeared to his brethren in the ministry ; in a word, Isaac Puffer was an honest hearted CHRISTIAN.

Of the peculiar style and character of Father Puffer's preaching, we cannot do better by our readers than to insert here as the conclusion of this chapter, the following sketch, written by Zachariah Paddock, D. D., and found in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*. Although long, it will repay a perusal :

"Though his origin was humble, and his early advantages inconsiderable, he became one of the most useful preachers of his time. His great strength lay in the ease and skill with which he quoted and applied the Sacred Text. In this respect he probably had no compeer in the whole connection. Of philosophy he had no more knowledge than he had of polite literature, and certainly had very little of either ; but everything in the 'book divine' was at his tongue's end. And one peculiarity in his preaching was, he always gave book, chapter and verse.

"In the early part of his ministry the Calvinistic controversy largely engrossed public attention. The Calvinism of that day was of the pure, unmixed kind. So extreme was it, that it would now be called Antinomianism even by the Calvinists themselves. The proper moral agency of man was practically ignored, if not theoretically and verbally denied. Sinners were treated as if they could do nothing, and therefore really had nothing to do ; while saints were safe any

how, as they could not do otherwise than persevere. Men were mere passive agents in the hands of God, if indeed agents at all, and acted only as they were acted on. When the writer was a boy, a grave old divine, who was very anxious to keep 'the poison of Arminianism,' as he called it, out of his father's house, spent long hours there in debate with a member of the family who was avowedly inclined to the heresy in question. In one instance, to illustrate the 'divine sovereignty,' he took the fire shovel in his hand, and said: 'There, the sinner is in God's hand, just as this shovel is in mine. Now he is moving him right on toward hell, (suited the action to the teaching,) and now, (reversing the movement,) toward heaven.'

So long as views like these were prevalent among the masses, early Methodist preachers felt that they could do little in leading men to repentance and Christian activity. Hence, a preliminary work, almost everywhere to be done, was to dislodge these errors from the popular mind. Controversial preaching was therefore, in a sense, quite unavoidable.—However averse to it, either from temperament or otherwise, every itinerant was obliged to take the attitude of a polemic. Those of the present day, when there is such a practical convergency in the current theological systems, can have little idea of the difficulties then to overcome. But while *all* had then, in a peculiar sense, 'To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,' *some* seemed to have a singular talent for the controversy, and therefore a special call to it. Such was Isaac Puffer. Generous and tender-hearted as he was, almost to a fault, the violent peculiarities of the Genevan creed received no mercy at his hand. His onslaughts were terrible. When he opened his scriptural battery, the enemy must either retreat or capitulate, or at least, disguise himself. Two or three hundred proof-texts, by no means an unusual number in one single discourse, wrought into a chain by his masterly hand, speedily did the work. Probably, indeed, no other man of his day, contributed anything like as much as he did to disabuse the popular mind of these paralyzing errors. During the latter part of his public life, however, he had little occasion to preach in this strain, and really seemed to enjoy exceedingly the most intimate relations and tender communions with those very people whose doctrinal creed he

had demolished with such an unsparing hand. His was, indeed, a war of love.

Another form of error against which he aimed, if possible, a still more effective blow, was Universalism. This, as a kind of offshoot of Hyper-Calvinism, had almost everywhere diffused itself. Receiving the dogma that 'God hath unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass,' it maintained that man could not be justly punished in a future state. Why send him to perdition for doing just what God eternally designed he should do? The logic was simple, and people who had been accustomed to hear and believe the doctrine of 'the divine decrees,' had little difficulty in accepting the soothing corollary. Indeed, the conclusion seemed to be quite as irresistible as it was comforting. So thought vast multitudes, and hence Universalism was found in almost every nook and corner of Old Genesee. And, if already safe, what need was there of man's troubling himself about his salvation? The matter was all settled without *his* agency, and he had only to wait till God saw proper to take him to that land of rest. Thus reasoned and thus acted no inconsiderable percentage of our population. Universalism must, therefore, be shown to be untenable, and the hopes inspired by it to be delusive; for till sinners could be made to see their danger, there was scarcely any possibility of leading them to repentance.

Such were the deliberate convictions of Puffer, and he governed himself accordingly. For the same reason he preached at all, therefore he deemed it his duty to oppose Universalism. But here, as elsewhere, the only magazine whence he drew his munitions of war was found amply sufficient for his purpose. With book in hand, he was always ready for battle. The abettors of a dangerous error quailed before him. Its mightiest champions stood no chance at all before his sweeping battery. If, as was sometimes the case, they sought a personal tilt, the challenge was eagerly accepted, when evangelical truth was sure of a triumphant vindication. Debates of this sort are seldom thought to be profitable; but as conducted by him, they were not unfrequently productive of salutary results. But Puffer did not always wait for a challenge; he took the initiative himself. Wherever he went, he raised his voice against what he believed to be a dangerous error. The pathos and power with which he preached against Univer-

salism were truly wonderful. Deep and irrepressible emotion would sometimes all but overcome him, causing him to tremble from head to foot like an aspen leaf. He not only trembled himself, but caused others to tremble. At the close of one of his great efforts, at a camp-meeting in Madison County, New York, held some thirty years since, a large number of Universalists—it was said, at the time, at least fifty—came forward for prayers, many of whom began from that hour to lead new lives. All over Central and Western New York, and in portions of the Canadas, persons are still to be found in large numbers who were led from Universalism to evangelical orthodoxy by this powerful preacher of God's word. No other man among us ever did a tithe of the work in this way that he did.

He was an indefatigable laborer. During a large portion of his public life he preached one or two sermons every day. He would not only perform all the labors of a large circuit, but was ready to respond, whenever he could, to calls from surrounding charges—calls that would have been of burdensome frequency to most other men. Indeed, he seemed never so happy as when he was in the pulpit. With the masses he was always exceedingly popular; but no one enjoyed his preaching better than he did himself. He loved the work, and he performed a vast amount of it. He had a large muscular frame, and a fine musical voice, so that preaching really taxed him probably much less than it does most other men.

A more generous heart than his never beat in the human bosom. He feared nobody, but loved everybody. Affliction anywhere at once enlisted his active sympathies. No matter what was the sufferer's character or condition, if he only fell under Puffer's observation he might be sure of having a brother's hand extended to him. If he could not relieve, he would at least pity. Like his Divine Master, he went about doing good. An instance may not be out of place. When traveling the Cayuga Circuit, some twenty-five or more years since, he was passing through the village of Auburn, on his way to a public engagement, when the team of some countryman who had come to town, took fright and ran away. Such things were of daily occurrence in their streets, and the citizens intent on their *own* business, scarcely noticed the incident. Not so with Puffer. Seeing the poor man's affliction, though a total stranger, he could

not leave him. With all his strength and agility he started off in pursuit of the fleeing horses, and so intense was his anxiety, that he really seemed to be more deeply interested than the owner himself. He had, in fact, by deep and tender sympathy, made the case his own. This little incident is referred to as an index to his whole social character. He would do the same thing, or its equivalent, every day in the year, without ever thinking he had done more than was usual among good men.

His honesty was transparent. So patent, indeed, was his childlike simplicity, that he was widely known by the *sobriquet*, 'Honest Isaac.' He seemed to have scarcely any idea of human policy. His own plans, and purposes, and motives of action, were always right on the surface, and there was just where he looked for those of other men. No wonder that impositions were sometimes practiced upon him, and no wonder that, to the superficial eye, he sometimes appeared to be vain, for he always spoke of his own failures and successes, just as he did of the failures and successes of other men. At the close of the camp-meeting sermon spoken of above, a brother met him outside the ground, and said, 'Brother Puffer, you had a good time to-day.' With the most perfect self-satisfaction legible all over his countenance, he approached the brother, and laying his hand familiarly on his shoulder, responded, 'Yes, brother, I *had* a good time. In truth, it is my preaching on some of these great subjects that makes me so popular. When I preach on common topics, I can't preach any better than the rest of you.' Near the same time he met the same individual in the village of Cazenovia, and reining his horse up to the sidewalk, said to him: 'Brother, I want *you* to go down to Chittenango and preach, for the people there think that no Methodist preacher is fit to be heard but *me*, and I want to have them learn better.' It is said by some that he never learned to conceal his heart. Good man, he is now with a multitude of his spiritual children, amid the glories of the throne."

CHAPTER II.

JOHN R. LEWIS.

IN the absence of sufficient data, the author finds pleasure in transferring to this work the following interesting obituary of Brother Lewis, which was first furnished for the columns of the *Northern Christian Advocate* by our worthy brother and esteemed fellow-laborer, Rev. Erasmus W. Jones. Aside from the facts inserted, the author can cordially endorse the high estimate placed upon the character of Brother Lewis by the above graphic and descriptive writer. We only remark, by way of preface to what follows, that the author's acquaintance with the deceased began at the time the latter was received as a probationer in the conference, in the year 1844, and became more intimate during the years that Brother Lewis was stationed on the South Canton Circuit, when the author, being stationed in the immediate vicinity, had frequent opportunities of meeting him in public and social religious meetings, on festive occasions, and in the family circle. I ever found our dear brother to be a warm-hearted friend—a companion, whose soul was full of geniality and sunshine, and whose presence was sufficient to drive away from the hypochondriac a host of “blue” spirits, which sometimes hover over the path of even a good man. It is said by some writer or speaker that it takes all classes of men to make a world, and it is equally true, that it takes a variety of classes to fill up the ranks of the ministry. If all were Johns, there would be no Peters; and if all were Pauls, there would be none by the name or with the characteristics of an Appollos! Yes, we must have a

variety in the ministry,—some who can little more than weep over the desolation of Zion, and others, who, when the fitting “time to laugh” comes, can express their inward joy in smiling glee, and who also, in seasons of affliction, can weep most heartily and sympathetically with those who weep. True, it is difficult at times to tell where grief should end and mirth begin, or to judge always correctly how far a Christian, and especially a Christian minister, may indulge in mirthfulness; we know of no rule whereby the matter may be determined, only to observe the apostolic injunction: “Let your moderation be known unto all men.”

These remarks are not intended to apply wholly, or by inference, to either condemn or approve the subject of this sketch. That our good brother was among the cheerful ones of earth, that his mind was cast not in the mould of melancholy gloom, but in nature’s more cheerful sunlight, is a fact which all who had the happiness of his acquaintance very well know; and yet to approve unbounded mirth on the one hand, would be to encourage frivolity and thoughtlessness; and to condemn all pleasantry on the other, would be to endorse a spirit of gloom, incompatible with the better instincts of our nature, and but little in accordance with the genius of true religion, which brings forth the ripened fruits of love, joy and peace. We simply add, that if there is error in either extreme—for there is a happy medium between sinful mirth and sinful gloom—it is safer to err in regard to the former than the latter—safer by far, as it regards our own happiness and the happiness of those around us. From all foolish talking and jesting, and from all peevishness, moroseness and long-facedness,—good Lord deliver us! We will now insert the Memoir alluded to, and add a few other items of interest.

REV. JOHN R. LEWIS, OF THE BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE.

“In compliance with the request of Mrs. Lewis, and with feelings of gratitude for the privilege of speaking of genuine departed worth, in the person of my late friend and brother,

these few lines are presented to the numerous readers of the *Northern Christian Advocate*. Many there are, undoubtedly, in our conference, who had greater facilities for personal acquaintance with the subject of this brief Memoir, than myself, and therefore are better qualified to do justice to the departed; but with John R. Lewis, I also have had the pleasure of some sweet acquaintance; and, if genuine friendship and strong Christian attachment in the premises can render any assistance, I shall not be left without help. Brother Lewis has left us some very precious manuscripts, in the form of a journal, to which I have had free access. From these, written with his own hand, I have been enabled to derive all the facts essential to the foundation of a correct biographical sketch. I have now in my possession a large collection of very interesting items, connected with the short career of the worthy departed, that would fill a good-sized volume; but such must be the length of this article, that nearly all of these must be omitted, and a few must suffice.

“John Rowland Lewis was born on the 14th of June, 1819, in the town of Underhill, Chittenden County, Vt. His father’s house was located on the banks of a small stream, at the foot of the highest peak of the Green Mountains, from which spot a beautiful view was had of the towns and villages below. So Brother Lewis was in reality one of the ‘Green Mountain boys.’ His mother died when he was quite young, of whom he had but a slight recollection. From an early period in his history, he was the subject of deep and pungent convictions. Often his youthful heart would throb with painful emotions, while his eyes were bathed in tears on account of his sins.

“At the early age of twelve years, he gave his heart to God, and ‘received the spirit of adoption, whereby he could cry, Abba Father.’ For a while he lived in the sweet enjoyment of God’s love. Uninterrupted joy was his portion.

‘His seas were calm, his skies were clear.’

Sweet streams of consolations flowed into his youthful heart;

‘Jesus all the day long,
Was his joy and his song.’

But, through the intrigues of the enemy, and the wiles of older transgressors, he was soon led away from the simplicity of the gospel, lost his enjoyment, gave up the ways of

religion, and led the miserable life of a backslider; and in this condition he remained until the 7th of September, 1837, when, at a camp-meeting, God in mercy saw fit to restore unto him the joys of his salvation. His own language is this: 'In the evening, about 7 o'clock, I went into a tent, and entered a prayer circle; and there, by the grace of God, I trust my sins were buried, never to rise again. I returned from this meeting to my employment with my heart overflowing with love, both to God and man.' From the journal of Brother Lewis, it is quite evident that from this time he received very clear indications from the Spirit of God, that it was his duty to go forth in the name of his Great Master, and proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to a dying world.

On the 15th of October, 1838, while in his nineteenth year, Brother Lewis bade adieu to his 'Green Mountain State,' and on the 2d of November found himself among his friends and relatives in Verona, Oneida County, N. Y. Here it appears he enjoyed his mind well, and held very sweet and pleasant communion with his God. The conviction of his call to the ministry became deeper and more pungent from day to day. In regard to this matter, he says: 'After serious reflection on the subject for about two years, I was constrained to make known to the world that God had called me by his providences, and more especially by his Holy Spirit, to abandon my worldly pursuits and engage in the arduous work of calling sinners to repentance. Accordingly, a public disclosure of my feelings was made at a camp-meeting, in the town of Westmoreland, on Sabbath evening, the 15th of September, 1839. I here resolved to set my life apart for the service of God. After my return, I immediately applied for and received a license to exhort in the M. E. Church, bearing date of October 2d, 1839.'

"Brother Lewis, after having received his license, was not idle. At once, with zeal and energy he entered into the work, and the salvation of souls was his constant theme. He held numerous meetings in the different vicinities, and God gave him tokens for good in the upbuilding of the Church, and the conversion of sinners. On this point, he remarked: 'In striving to do my duty, I enjoy a good degree of the presence of the Lord, and I grow more firm in the belief that God has called me to labor publicly in his vineyard.'

"In view of the great work before him, Brother Lewis

very wisely concluded to spend some time within the classic walls of Oneida Conference Seminary, at Cazenovia. This he did for at least two terms, from which, undoubtedly, he received untold benefit.

"Brother Lewis received license to preach, on Saturday, February 5th, 1841, at a place called 'Warner's Settlement,' near Baldwinsville, Onondaga County, N. Y. It appears from his journal, that this license was given to one that was determined by grace to improve it to God's glory. He '*studied* to show himself approved unto God, a *workman* that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.'

"On the 3d of June, 1841, Brother Lewis was joined in holy matrimony to Miss Ellen Suits, of Steuben, Oneida County, N. Y., a young lady of fine mind and deep piety. In regard to this, Brother Lewis remarks in his journal: 'In choosing a companion, I did not select for beauty, (wholly,) riches, extensive education, nor one from an opulent family; but I think I have selected one of more than usual activity in business, possessing an amiable disposition, well acquainted with domestic affairs, and well calculated to make a companion happy. O Lord, help us to be what husband and wife ought to be in the fear of the Lord! May we ever impart to each other such love and kindness as affectionate companions deserve, be an honor to the cause of Christ, a blessing to society, way-marks for glory, for Christ's sake, Amen!'

"On Saturday, June 8th, 1844, he was recommended by the Quarterly Meeting Conference, of Steuben Circuit, as a suitable person to join the traveling connection, and at the following session of conference, he was received and appointed to Herkimer Circuit, as a Junior Preacher, with Brother Slee. At the next session of conference, he was appointed to Lee Circuit, to travel under Brother G. C. Woodruff. In regard to his appointment, he says; 'With this I am well pleased. O Lord, grant me thy grace, and give us a prosperous year! O Lord, revive thy work, especially in my soul!'

"At the next session of conference, which met at Lowville, Brother Lewis was received into full connection, received the ordination of a Deacon, and was appointed to the charge of Three Mile Bay Circuit, with Brother Thos. P. Brown, as Junior Preacher. In regard to this, he exclaims:

‘O Lord, give us both a prosperous year! Make us a blessing to the circuit!’ At the next session of conference, he was appointed to Philadelphia Circuit. Next he was appointed to Theresa, where he remained for two years, and was blessed with a good degree of prosperity. He was next appointed to the charge of South Canton Circuit, where he remained for two years, and was greatly beloved by all. He was next appointed to Lysander Circuit, where he remained for one year, from whence he was sent to Van Buren Circuit. This was Brother Lewis’s last charge. For some time he had felt strong inclinations to remove to the West, and before the close of the conference year of 1854, he had fully made up his mind to that effect. Consequently, at the session of our conference at Camden, he asked for a transfer, which was granted; and to the sorrow of all his brethren in the ministry, he bade Black River Conference a final farewell. Before leaving for the West, he, with his family, spent some two weeks within the bounds of Steuben Circuit, where his wife’s relatives reside. During this time I had the pleasure of spending some hours in his society. I also had the pleasure of hearing him preach. His text was those words of the Saviour—‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ I had the impression then, and I have the same impression now, that his sermon was one of the best I had ever heard. I knew Lewis was a good preacher; but at that time he exceeded my most sanguine expectations. On the Sabbath evening before he started, he was with me at a certain appointment. Little did we think then, that he was destined to leave the society of mortals so soon. There he stood before us, the very picture of perfect health; and on that night, in an exhortation, he remarked that he had not experienced a day of real sickness in all his life.

“Before he reached his destination, he felt some symptoms of disease, but nothing to alarm him, or to cause him to abstain from his usual duties. On the morning of the last Sabbath he spent on earth, he left his family in the full confidence of joining it again at night, or in the morning. He had consented to fill one of the appointments of Rev. Michael Lewis, a beloved brother, with whom he had been intimately acquainted while within the bounds of the Black River Conference. In the morning, therefore, he preached. While in the company of Brother M. Lewis, and on their way to the afternoon appointment, he felt quite sick; so

much so, that instead of entering the place of worship, he went to a brother's house near by, and laid on a bed. His symptoms became very alarming. The physician was called, and every practical thing was done for him, but all of no avail. It soon became evident that Brother Lewis was drawing near the cold waters of Jordan. Of this he was fully aware himself; but death to him had no terrors. His mind was as peaceful as a summer breeze, and tranquil as the air of evening. With a heavenly smile on his countenance, he looked up, and with his hand uplifted, he cried,—‘Yonder is my home!’ At another time, a few moments before he left the shores of mortality, he cried—‘All is well!’ and soon he calmly fell asleep in the embrace of death. Thus passed away the happy spirit of our beloved brother. He died of cholera, in Kendall, Ill., at 2 o'clock on Monday morning, July 10th, 1854, aged 35 years and 26 days.

“Brother Lewis, *as a preacher*, was an ornament to our conference. His sermons were not of that shallow cast that called forth the *pity* instead of the attention of his hearers; but they abounded with genuine thoughts, solid matter, tangible ideas and sound theology.

“As a *companion and a parent*, he abounded in those affectionate graces that are so requisite to the happiness of the family circle. His home, to him, was a home indeed; there, kindness answered kindness, and affection met affection.

“In point of *sociability*, his cup was generally full and running over; and who could be melancholy and sad in the presence of John R. Lewis? His wit was of the genuine sort, and it never cost him the least effort. Sometimes his remarks would have some faint *appearance* of levity; but I think it was *only* in appearance. His expressions were often so peculiarly original, and so surcharged with pure native wit, that when, perhaps, he least expected it, he would find that his words had created quite a merry sensation. Let those who laugh more than is necessary at the peculiarity of a brother's sentences, beware lest they charge levity on the innocent party.

“Brother Lewis was *laborious*; to idleness he was an entire stranger—he was always at work. He was laborious as a student, a pastor, as a preacher, and when occasion required it, he disdained not to imitate the great Apostle of the Gentiles, by ‘working with his own hands.’

“He was called away from the church militant before he

reached the meridian of life. He was wanted to fill some important station in the church triumphant above. The young officer in the army of Jesus is called home. His promotion came at an early stage of the warfare. His sword is exchanged for the palm of victory—his cross for an immortal crown.

‘Servant of God, well done!
Thy glorious warfare’s past,
The battle fought, the vict’ry won,
And thou art crowned at last.’

“His memory is peculiarly dear to thousands, and to none more so, than to the brethren and sisters and friends within the Van Buren Circuit, where Sister Lewis, with her two children, now reside, and where they daily share the kind sympathies and tender regards of that *proverbially* liberal people, ‘whose praise is in all the churches.’ Their reward is on high.

“Adieu, John R. Lewis! No more do we see thy smiling countenance at our annual conference; but thou art not forgotten. For a while we are parted by the ‘narrow stream.’ The great bishop has seen fit to transfer thee to another and holier conference. Soon we meet again in a better land—

‘Where sickness, sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.’

E. W. JONES.”

As stated in the above sketch, Brother Lewis took a transfer from Bishop Morris, at the Black River Conference, held in Camden, 1854. His certificate of transfer was not addressed to any particular conference in the West. His design was to join the Rock River Conference, if his labors were needed there, and if not, to offer his certificate to the Iowa Conference. He consequently removed his wife and two children, with his household goods, to Illinois, where he awaited the time for the session of those conferences, the former to be held at Lewiston, Illinois, September 13th, and the latter at Dubuque, September 27th, Bishop Morris presiding at each of them.

The Black River Conference, that year, closed its session June 6th, and toward the end of the month, Brother Lewis

bade farewell to the scenes of his youthful ministry, and went among comparative strangers, not expecting so soon to fill a stranger's grave. His last sermon, preached only some fifteen hours before his death, was founded on Psalm 119, 156. "Great peace have they which love thy Law, Oh God, and nothing shall offend them." It is said that he preached an able and affecting sermon, notwithstanding his ill health. Thus the earthly labors of our dear brother were closed on earth, and thus he emigrated to that better country, where the inhabitants have no occasion to say "I am sick."

Shortly after his decease, his now lonely and disconsolate widow returned to New York, with her orphaned children. She was in very feeble health, and the expense of removing to, and returning from Illinois, had well nigh used up their scanty means. They have ever found warm hearted, sympathizing friends at Van Buren, their former place of residence, where their wants, for the time being, were bountifully supplied by that kind people. At the ensuing session of the Black River Conference, the question properly arose, what was Brother Lewis's status at the time of his death? Where did he belong? On what conference had his widow and children a claim? But one answer to these questions could be given, that he not having formed a connection with any other conference, was still a member of the Black River Conference, and thus, though our beloved brother "went out from us," he was still "of us," and we have the privilege of doing honor to his memory.

In appearance, Brother Lewis while among us, was a picture of rosy health, of robust manhood; one whose constitution seemed to be formed to endure the ruder shocks of time, and who more than many, if not all his brethren in conference, seemed likely to be fitted to endure the ups and downs, and to experience the lights and shadows of the itineracy, without serious detriment to health. Large and portly in person, firm and elastic in step, quick and vivacious in all his movements, with a warm, kind heart—who bid



REV. THO'S D. MITCHEL.

fairer to live to a good old age than he? And yet, how are the mighty fallen! How soon the prospect changes; and scarcely had the sound of his last farewell faded upon our ears, than we hear the doleful news, that our brother is dead!

“Yet again, we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is sped;
There in heaven with joy to greet thee
Where no funeral tears are shed.”

CHAPTER III.

REV. THOMAS D. MITCHELL.

THIS energetic, laborious minister of the gospel was born on a small island, near the entrance of Long Island Sound, known as Block Island, belonging to the State of Rhode Island. The event occurred in the year 17—. His father's name was Solomon Mitchell, and his mother's maiden name Ruth Sheffield. The latter was a pious woman, and previous to her marriage, was a member of the Freewill Baptist Church. The father did not embrace religion until a late period of life, when he, with his wife, cast in his lot, with the Methodists, with whom they remained united till transferred to the church above, both having lived consistent Christian lives, and died in the triumphs of the gospel and in the hope of a blissful resurrection.

When Thomas was quite young the family removed to the town of Exeter, Otsego County, New York, where he helped his father in the cultivation of his farm. There was a large family of children, among them John S., since become a celebrated minister of the Methodist Episcopal church, and better known as Rev. J. S. Mitchell, D. D., who

has filled some of the most important stations in and around New York and Brooklyn. The father was not wealthy, and as he needed the help of his sons in providing for the wants of the family, all the education they received at home was imparted through the means of the district school, which they attended in the winter seasons, giving their summer services to their father. Still Thomas acquired a good common school education. He was proverbially fond of his books, as he was also noted for his love of labor.

At the age of sixteen, he attended a camp-meeting at a place called Angel Hill, in Exeter, and as soon as he reached the ground, he heard a sermon preached by the venerable Ebenezer White, which being attended by the power of God, melted the heart of Thomas. He became deeply convicted of sin, and was led to exclaim: "What shall I do to be saved?" He resolved that he would seek the Lord and discharge every Christian duty, but he did not find rest for his soul for several weeks afterward. His load of sin seemed to increase, and he continued mourning and praying and sighing for relief. At length he went to a prayer meeting, some four miles from home, and having gone alone, at the close of the meeting he was invited by Brother Whipple, a local preacher, to go home with him to his house and tarry all night. He accepted the invitation, and while in family prayer, the man of God prayed earnestly for the lad, the latter ventured to pray for himself, and there on his knees he found peace in believing, and his soul was made happy in the possession of the love of God!

"Then his happy soul could sing,
Mercy's free, mercy's free."

The next morning he arose full of joy and peace, and returned to his home to relate what God had done for his soul.

Soon afterward, he joined the Methodist society in Exeter, Rev. Seth Mattison being then laboring on the charge, and a glorious revival of religion was experienced in that por-

tion of the work, which spread to adjoining towns, and in which our young friend took an active part. In due time he was admitted to the full fellowship of the church, and at the age of eighteen, he was appointed class leader in Richfield, and although he lived some three miles from the place where his class met, he was always on hand to take the lead of the little flock committed to his charge. He remained class leader for two years, when he received license to exhort from Rev. John Roper.

On the 7th of January, 1821, he was married in the town of Richfield, to Miss Freelove Taft, by Rev. James Hazen, the preacher in charge of the circuit. With this lady he spent many pleasant years. She sharing with him cheerfully and piously, the hardships of his itinerant life. After having exercised his gift as an exhorter for some three years, he with his wife removed to the village of Fulton, Oswego County, where he obtained license to preach as a local preacher, his license being signed by Rev. Gardner Baker, and from this period, for a series of years, until he joined the conference, he was employed on various circuits, by different presiding elders, and wherever he labored, the "pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hands," and his efforts were crowned with more than usual success. While thus laboring as a "supply," year after year, he passed through many severe trials. He felt that God had called him to the work of the ministry, not merely as a local, but as a traveling preacher; and he felt it his duty to take his place side by side with his brethren, not only in the pulpit, but on the floor of the conference. With this end in view, he allowed his name to be presented year after year for admission on trial, but, on account of his age, and his limited education, and the settled conviction which rested on the minds of many, that it would be impossible for him to acquire a knowledge of the conference course of study to such an extent as to pass a satisfactory examination, his application was year after year rejected. This was

a source of real grief to him. To be sure, he took one rejection after another patiently and meekly, he brought no railing accusation against any brother who did not feel it his duty to vote for his reception on trial, but cheerfully receiving any appointment from the hands of a presiding elder, he went to work as one commissioned by a higher power than man. Still he felt, and felt deeply, that his continued rejection was evidence of a want of confidence on the part of his brethren. This brought to him many sad hours, but instead of finding fault with his brethren, the conference, or the church, he laid his case before the Lord, and experienced in answer to prayer, the assurance that God's grace was sufficient for him.

Nothing daunted, however, by his repeated repulses, he continued, year after year, to knock for admission at the door of the annual conference. And so persevering was he in his efforts in this direction, that some of the younger brethren in the conference bestowed on him the by no means dishonorable *sobriquet* of "Old Final Perseverance," and persevere he did, until at length, in 1842, at the conference in Pulaski, the door was opened, and the long desired wish gratified. Three years previously, he was ordained a local deacon by Bishop Hedding, and now, having his name enrolled on the conference list of probationers, he applied himself closely to his studies, and went to his field of labor with renewed zeal and courage. He was sent to Williamstown Circuit as the sole preacher, where he labored very efficiently and successfully for two years, and had a glorious revival of the work of God. While stationed here, he assisted the brethren in the erection of a new church edifice, cheerfully laboring with his own hands, and with them rejoicing when the good work was completed.

In 1844, contrary to the expectations of many, he passed a very creditable examination at conference, and was admitted into full connection, ordained elder by Bishop Hamlin, at Potsdam, and was sent to Natural Bridge Circuit.

When he reached his new charge he found no dwelling house ready to receive him, and the brethren after a while found a place in the back part of a house into which he moved his goods, but which he and his wife found very inconvenient. Brother Mitchell told the brethren if they would go to work he would help them build a parsonage; they excused themselves for a time, but finally they consented to appoint a day to commence the work. The friends rallied and hauled the timber on to the ground, he laid out the work with his own hands, and in a few days the frame was up, the building enclosed, and during that fall he moved into it, with but one room finished off; but he and the brethren kept at work, until the entire lower part was completed, and which they were able to occupy during the ensuing winter. He remained two years on this circuit, and during both years had extensive revivals in different parts of the charge. During the second year, the revival extended to Pitcairn, on a remote part of the charge. Meetings were held in a school house, but the trustees after a while forbade the use of the house. The brethren were now in a dilemma—a revival, no place to meet in, no church, no school house—they were discouraged and concluded to give up their meetings. Not so Brother Mitchell: he appointed evening meetings at a private house, told the brethren to go to work and build a meeting house; they met for meetings in the evening, and during the day, with stout hands and willing hearts, they cut down trees, hauled the logs together, rolled them up, formed the walls of a church, covered the building, all under the superintendence of Brother Mitchell, and on next Sabbath, he preached in the same, and several souls were converted; on the following Sabbath they held a quarterly meeting there, when Rev. James Erwin officiated as presiding elder. Thus we see what perseverance can accomplish—a church erected in three days!

In 1846, he was appointed to Edwards mission, where he

also remained two years, and enjoyed as usual, refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord. In 1848, he was sent to Central Square Charge, where he had labored years before under the presiding elder, and where the brethren joyfully hailed his return among them. He enjoyed during this year also, a grand revival, but at the next conference, was appointed to the New London Charge. This was a year of sore trial to him, as he was sick the greater part of the time during his stay at the latter place. He remained at New London but one year. In 1850, he was sent to the Ohio Mission, in Herkimer County, where his health gradually improved. Here also, they were destitute of a parsonage. Brother Mitchell brought the matter before the brethren. They resolved to build—they joined in a “bee,” cut the timber, Brother Mitchell laying it out, and in the course of the following week, the building was up, and in the fall he moved into it, had a prayer meeting in the house the first evening, wherein the glory of God was powerfully revealed, and which proved to be the beginning of a glorious revival of religion. He remained here two years, and left at the end of that time, with mutual regret and sorrow on his part and that of the people.

In 1852, he was appointed to Frankfort Charge, in Herkimer County, where he remained two years, was instrumental in erecting a beautiful little church, and had it dedicated to the worship of God just before he left the circuit. Brother George Gary preached the dedication sermon, and money enough was raised on the occasion to pay all the indebtedness. Brother Gary, Brother Whipple and Brother Mitchell all sat side by side in the pulpit—three venerable men of God. Alas! that so soon all three of them should be no more inhabitants of earth! In 1853, Brother Mitchell was sent to Lee Circuit, in Oneida County. During this

enterprise of church building; although from his domestic affliction he could not give the subject that attention, which otherwise he would gladly have done, yet he was pleased to see the brethren engage heartily in the enterprise. His wife becoming nearly helpless, and thinking that she would not be able to itinerate any longer, he purchased a small house and lot, intending to secure a home for her and himself. At the conference held in Weedsport, in 1854, he was placed on the supernumerary list, and returned to Lee Circuit. His health had become somewhat impaired during the previous year, but he gladly undertook to fill certain appointments regularly during the year to come. His labors proved too much for his strength, over-action aggravated his disease—chronic erysipelas—and threw him prostrated upon the bed of sickness, and, as it ultimately proved, of death. His last sermon was preached on Sabbath, the 20th day of July. His affectionate companion, knowing his strength to be insufficient for the task, tried to persuade him not to go to his appointment, some six miles distant, but he replied he would rather “wear out, than rust out.” On his return that evening, his wife asked him if he was not sorry he went to his appointment? He replied he was not; that he had a good time, and he hoped good would result from that day’s labor, while at the same time he felt that he had preached his last sermon.

During that night he was taken violently sick, in the morning the physician was called in, who gave little or no hope of recovery. In the course of the day feeling some easier, he executed his last will and testament, and after that seemed to rest better. The following day, Tuesday, the disease seemed to centre in his head, and at times he was delirious. But his mind seemed to be all engrossed with his ministerial work, taking a text, preaching, praying and praising the Lord with a loud voice. Thus he lingered in great pain of body, but in great peace of mind, for four weeks. His last words were, “Oh, how grand! Tongue

can never express !” and on Sabbath morning, the 19th of August, 1854, he sweetly left earth without a struggle or a groan.

Brother Mitchell was a good man, a very good man, pious and upright. He loved to pray and read the Holy Bible. It was his practice to read the Bible through once in each year, at or before family prayer, and as he had been married over thirty-two years, he probably had read it through by course, that number of times. In physical proportions he was large and portly, with a frame that seemed to be well fitted to endure hardships. He had a pleasing countenance, and was well calculated to make friends. His manner was free, and although not possessed of the polish of the finished gentleman, he was by no means boorish nor awkward in his intercourse with others.

As a successful minister he had but few equals. If success is to be measured by the number of souls converted, the number of churches and parsonages erected, his constant acceptability among the people, and his undying devotion to his work as an itinerant Methodist preacher, then was brother Mitchell successful. If on the other hand, ministerial success is to be tested by the flowers of rhetoric and the charms of oratory—by the adulation of the proud and the admiration of the gay and giddy throng, then our brother might be placed in the back ground ; but if, as we believe, and as we think our readers will agree with us, a minister’s success consists in winning souls to Christ, and edifying the church, then might brother Mitchell take his place among the foremost of his brethren in the conference. But he “rests from his labors and his works follow him.”

CHAPTER IV.

REV. SAMUEL POPPLE.

THE subject of this short Memoir was not a member of the conference in full connection—was comparatively a stranger among us—and yet one who endeared himself to all during the short time we were permitted to enjoy his acquaintance, and it is probably for the above reason that the Committee on Memoirs reported a brief notice of the life and character, the last illness and death of this young preacher; and for the same reason, no doubt, the Secretary, Rev. I. S. Bingham, furnished a copy to the general minutes. Following the precedents thus made, the author, although entirely unacquainted with the subject of this sketch, and receiving no more information than that derived as above, inserts this brief chapter as a tribute to departed worth.

The Rev. Samuel Popple was born in England, in the year 1818. Of his parentage, particular place of birth, his early history, etc., we know nothing, only that in 1840, when about twenty-two years of age, he experienced the forgiveness of sin and became a member of the Wesleyan Societies in England, and for some time previous to his emigration to America filled the office of local preacher in the same.

In the year 1852, he came to America, stopped for a while in the city of Oswego, forming an acquaintance with Rev. Orlando C. Cole, pastor of the East Charge in that city, who, acquiring a favorable opinion of the talents and piety of Brother Popple, became much interested in his welfare, and

recommended him to Rev. Geo. G. Hapgood, D. D., at that time Presiding Elder of Oswego district, as a proper person to be employed by him if an opening presented itself. Brother Hapgood thinking favorably of him, employed him to fill a vacancy on Amboy Mission, which, at the previous conference, had been left to be supplied. He immediately repaired to his appointed field of labor, and labored with so much success, that the quarterly conference cordially recommended him to the annual conference as a proper person to travel and preach.

At the conference held in Watertown, June 2-8, 1853—Bishop Simpson presiding, P. D. Gorrie, Secretary—Brother Popple was duly received on trial, and appointed to Alexandria, in the eastern part of Jefferson County. On this circuit he labored with great acceptability, and at the following conference, held in Camden, he was continued on trial, and appointed to Pamela Circuit. He entered upon the discharge of his pastoral duties in the spirit of his Divine Master, preaching, praying, and visiting from house to house. In the course of the following winter a gracious shower of mercy descended upon the people of his charge, as may be seen in the following communication of Brother Popple to the *Northern Christian Advocate*:

“PAMELIA CORNERS, BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE.

“After deep humiliation and much prayer, the Lord has visited us in this place. It is so long since the church here was ‘blessed’ with a revival of religion, that some of the followers of Christ began to fear the ‘people of the world’ would lose all confidence in God, in religion, and in the Bible. Minister after minister came upon the charge, and it seemed as though the people were so ‘gospel-hardened,’ that even the most powerful preaching was incapable of moving them to submission and repentance. Such a state of things led us to consult with the leading lay-members upon the charge, as to the best means to be employed, under God, to bring about a better state of things. It was determined to set apart Sunday, Nov. 12, as a day of special humiliation and prayer. After the morning congregation, on that day,

had been dismissed, all the 'members of society' were requested to remain. The 'Form for the Renewal of the Covenant,' written by Dr. A. Clarke, was then read, and all who were willing to covenant with God, and with each other, to employ every consistent means to promote a revival of religion, were invited to kneel around the altar, and ask God to bless and seal the solemn covenant. In a moment the 'brethren and sisters,' one and all, were seen slowly gathering around the altar, and there we kneeled together in earnest prayer to God. After two or three had vocally led the rest in their aspirations to heaven, a few moments were spent in silent supplication; and it seemed as though the house was filled with the Divine Presence and glory; and every heart seemed to whisper: 'How dreadful is this place; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' From that time the class-meetings and prayer-meetings were attended with a greater degree of solemnity and feeling, but still no one came forward to manifest a desire for salvation. A deeper solemnity began to rest, also, upon the congregations during the time of public worship, which indicated the secret leaven was silently working; and many a heart was impatient for the expected 'out-breaks.' Soon a few could repress their feelings no longer, and publicly desired the prayers of God's people. But no general movement took place until Monday, January 8, when five persons came forward to pray, and to 'be prayed for;' the next evening others came, and soon the altar was crowded with weeping penitents, crying: 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!' And from that time to this date, the altar has been thronged, more or less, every evening, except when the storm has been so violent that the people could not come together. We have an excellent choir;—at the commencement of the revival, the members were nearly all 'unconverted;' but now, with one or two exceptions, they are all enjoying the love of God and the favor of heaven; their assistance in the prayer-meetings is truly delightful. 'We desire increased and continued success; to all praying people our language is: 'Brethren, pray for us.'

S. POPPLE."

January 29, 1855.

The above communication shows how much can be accomplished by a faithful, devoted minister of Jesus Christ,

even when outward circumstances seem forbidding. "A people gospel-hardened, so that the most powerful preaching was incapable of moving them," presents rather a forbidding prospect to the man of God, and might lead him to exclaim with anxiety, "Can these dry bones live?"—and the answer comes: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Brother Popple had learned the secret of his success as a minister, and as a leader of the elect of God he nobly stood up and invited the church to renew their strength with God.

While thus arduous in his labors, his health was quite poor, but he disdained to leave the field of conflict, so long as his strength would enable him to endure the strife. On the evening of the 16th of February, he was at his post, taking charge of a prayer-meeting. On the following day he became alarmingly unwell; he was seized with congestion of the brain, which produced not only derangement of the cerebral organs but settled insanity. During the following week, finding no relief, it was thought necessary to take him to the New York State Lunatic Asylum, in Utica, which was done on Saturday, the 24th of February. Here all was done for him that skill and medical science could do, but in vain. He continued to grow weaker until the following Wednesday, when nature yielded to the power of disease, and he found a speedy release from his sufferings, and a quiet repose in death. His remains were taken to the place of his late residence in Pamelia, and his funeral attended on the following Sabbath, in the presence of a large and weeping audience, who, by their signs of sorrow and regret, testified to the depth of their affection for him.

His widow, a pious and sensible, but infirm woman, with four children, was thus suddenly deprived of a husband's support and counsel, and thrown upon the charity of comparative strangers for support—she not being a claimant on the funds of the conference; but hitherto the Lord hath provided for her and her children, and will still provide.

Brother Popple was a good man—a man of much prayer, and deeply devoted to his work. He also gave great promise of being a useful minister of the gospel—was a close student, an affectionate father, a loving husband and an admirer of our free institutions. But his sun went down at noon, he being at the time of his death thirty-seven years of age.

CHAPTER V.

REV. GEORGE GARY.*

Rev. George Gary—the great, the good, the wise—was born in the town of Middlefield, Otsego County, N. Y., on the 8th day of December, 1793. His parents came to New York from Pomfret, Windham County, Conn. When George was two years old, his mother died. Previous to her death she was visited by a faithful Methodist preacher, who spoke to her of the way of salvation, and who proved instrumental in her conversion, so that in her departing moments she felt that the sting of death had been taken away. The narrative of his mother's sickness, and especially of her triumphant death, through the efforts of this pious preacher, had a powerful and salutary influence on the mind of George, when he arrived at such an age as to be capable of understanding these things. The motherless boy, with feelings of gratitude and filial love, thought in his youthful, confident heart, that no class of men were equal in piety and usefulness to Methodist preachers. He fell in love with them

* The author is indebted to Mrs. Susan Gary, relict of Rev. G. Gary, for several important items of information contained in this Memoir.

as a class, and, no doubt, from this circumstance, his mind received a bias that shaped his destiny for life, and proved to him the beginning of the end of a long career of piety and ministerial success. The humble pastor, who knelt by his mother's bedside and poured out his soul in her behalf, little dreamed or thought of the seed he was sowing in the mind of the infant two years old.

After his mother's death, his father returned to Pomfret, his native place, where George was placed in the care of his uncle, Noah Perrin, of Pomfret, a name well known in the annals of New England Methodism. In the summer after he was thirteen years old, he commenced a life of prayer, but kept the matter to himself. His mind became deeply awakened to a sense of his sinfulness, although he had always been a sedate, modest and moral youth, never using profane language, or indulging in gross sin. Nevertheless, he felt and saw himself to be a sinner, exposed to the perdition of the ungodly. His seasons of prayer, though frequent and regular, brought no repose to his agonized soul, probably because he felt unwilling to unbosom his thoughts or openly acknowledge himself a seeker of salvation. At length, after a sermon preached in his uncle's house by the venerated Elijah R. Sabin, and in the prayer-meeting which followed the sermon, he saw his duty clearly, and while kneeling in the corner of the old-fashioned kitchen, where was piled up the fire-wood to be used as fuel, he found peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. This memorable occurrence took place on the 7th day of December, 1807—on the eve of his fourteenth birthday.

After his conversion, he secured not only the confidence of his friends and acquaintances in the reality of the work wrought in his heart, but also, by his youthful labors and prayers, was instrumental in producing on the minds of others a very favorable impression in regard to the truth and excellency of religion, while his daily deportment was ever afterward such as to adorn the doctrine of the gospel.

In the month of March, 1808, he became for the first time impressed that it was his duty to preach the gospel. This impression produced a painful struggle in his mind, which continued for months—in the meanwhile, not daring to unburden his thoughts to any one, nor having any one say aught to him on the subject. At length, after much prayer and reading of the Bible, particularly Jeremias i, 7-9, he deliberately determined to do his duty, whatever it might be, as Providence should open the door. In the following December, he was authorized by the presiding elder to hold meetings for exhortation and prayer, and under his direction the work of his life was commenced, and young Gary found himself preaching the gospel to his fellow men. In the following spring of 1809, his presiding elder took him to several of his quarterly meetings, where he occasionally exhorted and sometimes formally preached. In the month of May following, at the last quarterly conference for Pomfret Circuit, prior to the session of the New England Annual Conference, he was duly licensed to preach the gospel, and also recommended as a suitable person to join the traveling connection. When the conference met, he was received on trial, his name placed upon the printed minutes—and thus, while Gary was only fifteen years and a few months old, he became an itinerant Methodist preacher—the youngest candidate ever received into the traveling ministry of the M. E. Church.

Being received as a traveling preacher, he was appointed to Barre Circuit, in the state of Vermont. The conference sitting in Monmouth, Me., he had a journey of nearly two hundred miles before him in order to reach his field of labor. As he mounted his horse to leave his home and go among strangers, his pious uncle gave him the following excellent advice, which George never forgot but implicitly obeyed: "Never pretend that you know much, George; for if you do so pretend, the people will soon find out that you are sadly mistaken: neither tell them how little you

know, for this they will find 'out soon enough." This was sagacious council, and it would be well if some other *Georges* besides the above would practice on the advice here given, even though it may be some one else than an "uncle" who gives it. On his way north, he shed many tears at the recollection of the home and friends he was leaving and the prospects before him. The people received him cordially, it is true, but could scarcely believe it possible that one so young was fitted for the responsible duties of a Methodist traveling preacher.

Piety in youth is always lovely, and insures the respect and admiration of all candid persons; but when to youthful piety is added personal attractions, becoming modesty, and remarkable talent, something more than mere respect and admiration is evinced—there is a feeling akin to that of strong affection, which arises spontaneously in the bosoms of all, which impels toward the object of attention. Young Gary, when he commenced his career as a Methodist itinerant preacher, was a lad between the age of fifteen and sixteen, of light complexion, flaxen haired, with a beautiful finished countenance, and his entire form cast in nature's most perfect mould. To these were added a timid, almost a feminine modesty, and deep, heart-felt and fervent piety. No wonder that the people loved him, and as he threaded the valleys and climbed the hills of the Green Mountain State, it was no marvel that hundreds flocked to hear the beardless boy. True, Methodism was not very popular among the staid Vermonters. The doctrines of Calvin had taken strong hold of the opinions and even affections of the people; they could ill brook the teachings of Arminius, or the free and full gospel, as preached by the Methodists; nevertheless, prejudices were frequently overcome, and among the green clad hills of Vermont were many who embraced the peculiar doctrines of the Methodists.

Young Gary had not been favored with a collegiate, or even academical education. He was too young to have

secured the former, and his circumstances had not permitted the latter to any great extent, if at all. And yet, for the age in which he commenced his ministry, and the class of people to whom he offered the words of eternal life, he was well qualified for his work. Not that the people of that day, or portion of the country where he labored, were ignorant and unenlightened; but they demanded more gospel and less science, more scripture and less history, more Holy Ghost and less tinsel and ornament in the sermons of their preachers, than do the people of the present day. Hence the young man armed and equipped with a copy of the Bible in his hand, and its truths lodged in his heart and engraven on his memory, with his hymn book and a few well selected theological volumes to assist him in his researches and explorations after the hidden stores of wisdom; with a soul full of love, and fire, and power, was not unqualified to tell the people how they might find Jesus, and experience the power of his resurrection. Although George had not had the advantages of an academical education, his mind was by no means an uncultivated waste. The few books he had were eagerly read, and being an acute observer of men and things, even at this early age, he acquired an extensive knowledge of human nature and the operations of the human mind, which gave him a degree of influence and power that could never have been otherwise secured, even had he reclined for years in the shades of classic halls, or borne away the honors of his *Alma Mater*.

As it was, the people thronged to his appointments. In his presiding elder, Thomas Branch, he had just the friend, father, and counselor, that he needed. Brother Branch was affable, tender hearted and kind to the timid and young—a model Methodist preacher, and made a happy impression on George's mind in the beginning of his ministry.

George attended the conference of 1810, in Winchester, N. H. Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present, and looked upon him with surprise. Asbury approached

him, and placing his apostolic hands on the head of the young man, he blessed him in the name of the Lord. "We cannot," said the venerable bishop, "promise you ease, nor honor, nor money; but work enough while you live, and the crown of life when you die." At this conference he was appointed to the Union Circuit, in Maine, with Rev. Daniel Stimpson as his colleague. On this circuit he labored with constant fidelity, traveling from place to place, and performing probably more labor in a week than the majority of us, his brethren, now do in a month. When not engaged in preaching, George employed his leisure hours in poring over the books of his small but well-selected library. In this manner he daily added to his stock of knowledge. Having completed his two years' term of probation, he attended the conference of 1811, held in Barnard, Vermont. He was received into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Asbury, and appointed to the Orrington Circuit, Maine, as preacher in charge, while as yet but rising of seventeen years of age. It was a laborious three weeks' circuit, and he trembled at the responsibility thus cast upon him, but he found in Rev. Enoch Mudge an excellent counsellor and a sure friend. Brother Mudge resided in Orrington, and in speaking of him, Brother Gary remarks in a letter to Rev. Abel Stevens: "In this great and good man is found one of the fairest and best samples of a Methodist preacher. With this model before me very often, (for I was with him a great deal), I was highly favored. No man ever helped me more in giving me just views of arranging and connecting the parts of a sermon, and of understanding the sacred text, taking into account the context and parallel passages, than this venerable preacher. If there be in me any valuable traits as a Methodist minister, under God, the timely aid and influence of this father in the gospel had a hand in moulding them."

At the following conference of 1812, he was appointed preacher in charge of Georgetown Circuit, in Maine. In

1813, having passed through the disciplinary term of the novitiate, he was ordained to the full order of the ministry, and became officially—what otherwise would have been a misnomer—an “elder” in the church. Having been thus ordained, and desiring to return to his native state, in which his father now resided, he requested a transfer to the Genesee Conference, which request was granted. “In a short time,” he writes, “I was on my horse, directing my course to the West, as it was then called. In due season I arrived at my father’s residence and the place of my own nativity. Here I visited the grave of my mother. I stood there, a Methodist itinerant, over the beloved dust of her who had been instructed and led to Christ by the first pioneers of Methodism in this new country. I felt it a privilege to be a Methodist preacher, out of gratitude to God for the grace bestowed upon her in her decline to the grave.” He received his appointment to old Herkimer Circuit, with Reuben Farley as senior preacher. Next year he received the charge of Otsego Circuit, to which he was returned in 1814, having two elders, Seth Mattison and Asa Cummings, as his junior colleagues. 1815–16, Sandy Creek Circuit, and 1817, Utica, were his fields of labor. From 1818 to 1822, he was presiding elder of Oneida District, and in this new relation he acquitted himself in such a manner as to secure the friendship and confidence of both preachers and people. After the expiration of his constitutional term of service, he was appointed presiding elder of the Chenango District, which he served for three years. In 1825, he received the appointment of “Conference Missionary,” an office or position for which no disciplinary provision had been made, and which but few of our ministers have ever filled. Nevertheless, we have long been of the opinion that if the right man were found, holy, zealous, laborious, apt to teach and interest the people, willing to make sacrifices and to give himself wholly to the work—if such a man were to go from charge to charge, armed with the authority and

under the sanction of the bishop and conference, to assist the pastor in holding series of meetings—such an office would be of incalculable benefit to the church. We are not, indeed, aware how far or how much Brother Gary was expected to assist the pastors, if at all; or whether his mission was more particularly intended for destitute portions of the work. In either case, Brother Gary was eminently fitted for the office. At the close of this year he was re-appointed presiding elder of Chenango District, where he remained two successive years, when, in 1828, he was transferred to the charge of Cayuga District, in the newly formed Oneida Conference. In 1829, he was preacher in charge of Marcellus Circuit. The following year, 1830, he was again appointed presiding elder of the Oneida District, where he remained the full term of four years. In 1834, he was appointed to the charge of the Oneida Indian Mission, which at that period had a membership of eighty-six Indians, and which has always been considered an interesting and important field of labor. In 1835, he was stationed at New York Mills, where he remained one year.

We have now arrived at the period when the Black River Conference was organized. When Gary first appeared as a Methodist preacher in Central New York, all the territory now embraced in the Genesee, East Genesee, Wyoming, Oneida, Black River and the soon-to-be-organized Central New York Conferences, together with the whole of Upper Canada, was included in the limits of the Genesee Conference. The number of traveling preachers at that time, within her bounds was 67 of members 10,468. How greatly has God prospered the labors of such men as George Gary and his compeers, in causing the little one to become a thousand in the land. In 1836, Brother Gary, who had now become a man of venerable appearance, was appointed to the charge of Herkimer District, where he served as presiding elder for the term of four years. In those days it was customary for the presiding bishops of our

conferences to select the wisest and best men we had, as committees of examination, and without designing to cast any reflections upon our committees of more recent date, we sincerely wish the old method was revived, even although it might require the presence of one or more presiding elders at these examinations. Brother Gary was frequently appointed on such committees, and although mild, he was nevertheless careful to allow no candidate to pass muster, unless he was fully satisfied of his having attended to the conference course of study. On one occasion, while sitting as chairman of the committee, during his presidency of Herkimer District, and while Rev. Luther Lee was examining the class on church government, a question was put by the examiner to a young man belonging to Brother Gary's district, in reference to a point of discipline, about which there was some difference of opinion among our oldest and wisest ministers. The examiner propounded the question: "Brother D., what would you do in such a case?" Brother D. promptly replied, "There is a difference of opinion among our wisest men on that point; I prefer not to give my opinion." The same question was proposed to other members of the class, but for a similar reason, all preferred not to answer it. At length the examiner said, "As the class is unwilling to answer, we shall have to look to our chairman, Brother Gary, to settle the matter." Brother Gary, however, not wishing to become judge in the matter, requested the examiner to answer his own question; this the latter declined doing. Brother Gary, still unwilling to commit himself on this controverted question, addressed himself to the candidate, and in a smiling manner said to him: "Brother D., what would you do in the case? Pray tell." The young man, anxious to oblige his beloved presiding elder, and yet equally anxious not to interpose an opinion where greater men differed, calmly replied, with an arch look: "I would write to my presiding elder for instruction!" This witty reply created some pleasantry and greatly relieved for the

time the tedium of a conference examination, but failed to elicit a reply from Brother Gary or either of his associates on the committee.

In 1840, Brother Gary received his appointment to Oswego District, where he remained one year, and was then appointed to Vienna Circuit, in Oneida County. There is something remarkable in the economy of the Methodist Church, in relation to the appointment of preachers, a peculiarity known in no other department of the church, namely, the perfect equality of the preachers as it regards their fields of labor, and the almost entire absence of mere favoritism on the part of the bishops of the church, in making appointments to those fields. To illustrate this point: here is an aged, venerated minister of the gospel, whose talents are sufficient to enable him to adorn any pulpit in the land, whose zeal and piety have always been unquestioned, whose labors have been abundant, and whose influence in the conference and in the bishop's council was unbounded; one who had spent many years as the honored and revered presiding officer of large districts, having able, influential men under him, as their superior in office, and yet one who, when the state of the work demanded his appointment to a less important, less responsible, and less honorable position, could calmly retire without loss of honor to himself; and not only without regret on his part, but with thankfulness that, for a time at least, he could partially lay aside his heavy responsibilities and cares as the chief officer of a district, and assume the less responsible, but more quiet and equally important duties of the pastorate.

We should have remarked in previous paragraphs that Brother Gary had attended two general conferences as delegate from the Oneida Annual Conference—in 1832, and in 1836. At the session of the Black River Conference—in 1839—he was elected delegate from that body, his name standing first on the list, he having received the largest number of votes. Accordingly on the first day of May, 1840, we

find him in his seat in the general conference room in the city of Baltimore, where he represented, with honor to himself and to the body which commissioned him, the interests of the church in Northern and Central New York. We may state also, in this connection, that he was again elected the leading member of the delegation to the general conference of 1844, held in the city of New York, but for reasons stated elsewhere, he was not present. It was at this conference that Southern treason and rebellion showed its cloven foot, and prepared the way, according to the prediction of Henry Clay, for the mighty struggle of 1861-2-3, between treason and loyalty, and slavery and liberty. As in the nation, so in the church, the dark and abhorrent system of human chattelism had been slowly and insidiously creeping into, and leaving its black stain upon all our institutions. Not satisfied with having polluted the private and official membership of the church, it sought to encircle within its hidden folds, the ministry, and even to slime over with its venom the episcopacy of the church! It succeeded, alas, too well. Ministers and conferences in the South, seemingly without regret, or sense of shame, allowed themselves to be ensnared and stung by the worse than fiery serpent. Even a bishop, resident in the South, could not resist the wile of the charmer, but quietly laid himself down in his episcopal robes and permitted the poisonous reptile to crawl over him, and defile his office and his character. The story of this sad episcopal decline and the dishonor which had fallen on the hitherto unspotted reputation of our beloved bishops, reached the ears of Northern men and Northern delegates for the first time at this general conference. A sense of shame, almost of guilt, took possession of Northern hearts; and prayers were offered, and tears were shed, and entreaties were made, to the bishop thus disgracing himself and the whole church, that he would free himself from the evil; but no! entreaty was in vain, expostulation was useless, this man had joined

himself to his idols, and he desired to be let alone. But the majority of the conference thought otherwise ; the evil must be put away, or the bishop must cease to be a bishop. The latter had his advisers and abettors among the Southern delegates. A sufficient number of them to form a respectable minority protested against the action of the majority—backed up the bishop in his course of transgression and treason, and the result was SECESSION. Thus the largest and in many respects the most influential church in the United States was sundered in twain by the demon SLAVERY.

During the discussions of this stormy and ever memorable session, all our delegates from Black River took the anti-slavery side of the question, and cast their votes in the right direction ; and had Brother Gary been present, he no doubt would have occupied a prominent position in sustaining the principles of anti-slavery doctrines and practice, for although rather inclined to a conservative course in relation to our Southern brethren, who were involved in the evil and evidently afraid of moving too fast in opposition to slavery, yet in his heart he detested the institution ; and had he possessed the power, would have swept it from the face of the earth. At that period the eyes of Northern men and ministers were but half opened to the enormities of the slave system ; true, they abhorred it, desired its extinction, but like a deep-rooted cancer on the human body, it was thought by many to be beyond the reach of any curative power ; hence, about the only thing in their view that could be done, was to let it alone ; and it was only after the full development of the designs of the slave power, as it relates to territory and the continued subjection of the North to the mandates of that power, that Northern men and ministers began to awaken, as from a long deep slumber, and to see the inroads that slavery was making ; and the ruin that we were threatened with, as the price of its toleration. Thank God the Northern heart has been

reached at last ; and although our present knowledge and experience of the blessings and beauties of the " patriarchal institution " have been dearly bought by blood and treasure, yet the lesson learned may save us from still greater evils in the future.

But to return to our subject : In 1842, Brother Gary was appointed presiding elder of the Herkimer District, where he had before served in that capacity. In 1843, he was appointed back to Oswego District, where he had before served as presiding elder, but was destined to remain this last time but a portion of the year, being called to another and distant field of labor. We stated in connection with our remarks upon the general conference of 1844, that although Brother Gary was elected as the leading delegate to that body, yet he was not present. We now proceed to give the reason for his absence, which was nothing less than his appointment to the superintendency of the Oregon Indian Mission, and his departure for that far distant region.

" In the year 1832, four Indians belonging to the Flat Head tribe, west of the Rocky Mountains, performed a wearisome journey on foot to St. Louis, Missouri, for the purpose of inquiring for the Christian's Book, and the white man's God. Early in 1833, notice of this wonderful event was given in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, published in New York, and a general feeling of Christian sympathy was produced in all the churches of the land for these interesting heathen ; and a proposition was made that the Missionary Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, proceed forthwith to establish a mission among the Flat Head Indians. This measure was strongly advocated by Dr. Fisk, Dr. Bangs and many others, while none were opposed to the accomplishment of so worthy an object. While the subject was being agitated, Dr. Fisk corresponded with Rev. Jason Lee, of Stanstead, Canada East,—the doctor having formerly been his tutor in the Wilbraham academy,—to ascertain whether he would undertake the superintendency of an Indian mission beyond the Rocky Mountains. Dr. Lee was then employed on an Indian mission under the

direction of the church in Canada, but yielding to the solicitations of Dr. Fisk, and from a conviction of duty, he left Canada and repaired to Boston in June, 1833, where the New England Conference was then in session. He was received into that body as a member on probation, ordained by Bishop Hedding, and on the recommendation of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was appointed to the superintendence of the Oregon Mission.

"In the following August, Rev. Daniel Lee, a nephew of Rev. Jason Lee, was appointed to labor in the same field. When they received their appointment they knew of no way to get to the field assigned them, unless they ventured alone across the continent through hostile tribes, or could find some vessel bound to the north west coast, around Cape Horn, that would take them on board; and they continued in suspense in regard to their mode of proceeding, until November, when notice appeared in the public journals, that Capt. N. J. Wyeth, of Cambridge, Mass., had recently returned from a tour west of the Rocky Mountains, and that he contemplated returning to Oregon the following spring. On receiving this intelligence, J. Lee immediately repaired to Boston, had an interview with Capt. Wyeth, and readily obtained permission to accompany him back to Oregon."

Capt. Wyeth having chartered a vessel to send to Oregon with a load of goods, the missionaries availed themselves of the opportunity of putting on board the necessary mission outfit. Mr. Lee also engaged Mr. Cyrus Shepard, a lay member of the church, to accompany himself and associate, on their journey westward. Accordingly, early in March, 1834, they left New England, and on arriving in Missouri, they were joined by Mr. P. L. Edwards, another lay member, so that the mission party now numbered four persons. Proceeding from St. Louis, they reached Fort Independence on the 24th of April, where they were joined by Capt. Wyeth and his party. On the following day they began their perilous journey toward the Rocky Mountains, and after four months incessant toil, and the endurance of many hardships, they arrived safely at Fort Walla-Walla, on the Columbia river

in Oregon, on the 1st of September, 1834. On the 15th of September they reached Vancouver, and were received with great hospitality and kindness by the gentlemen connected with the fort at that place.

After some hesitation and delay, a mission station was at length established in the valley of the Wallamette, about seventy-five miles from the mouth of the river, a log house was erected, an Indian school was established, and regular worship was commenced at a private house. Thrown entirely upon their own resources for food, they commenced cultivating the ground—they must do so or starve—and thus the Oregon Mission became, as a matter of necessity, partly a secular establishment, while among the few white settlers and the Indians, the missionaries sowed the seed of gospel truth. Oregon Territory was then in its formation state. Settler after settler went in, and although at the time when our missionaries arrived, there was no civil government nor existing laws, yet, as the population increased, it was found necessary even among the few, to establish some kind of provisional government. Accordingly, in 1838, a few persons were chosen to officiate as magistrates or judges in civil actions. In 1840, on the death of a prominent member of the territory, who died intestate, it was found necessary to institute a court of probate, by calling a public meeting of all the inhabitants of the territory, the preliminary arrangements for which were made at the funeral of the above person, and in which our missionaries acted a conspicuous part, and bore their full share of responsibility in the proceedings thereof.

To return to the subject of the mission. As new settlers multiplied, and the spiritual wants of the people were more or less unprovided for because of the scarcity of laborers, Brother Lee, the superintendent, early in 1835, sent an earnest solicitation to the Mission Board at New York, for a reinforcement of missionaries. In compliance with this request the Board appointed eight persons to act as mis-

sionaries or assistants—three gentlemen and five ladies, who, sailing from Boston in July, 1836, arrived in Oregon in May, 1837. In September of the same year, another reinforcement to the mission arrived, consisting of two ministers, with two female assistants. In the spring of 1838, a new station was established at the Dalls, on the Columbia river, and Rev. D. Lee and H. N. W. Perkins were appointed to take charge of it. Before their departure for their new field of labor, a general consultation of the missionaries was had on the subject of a still greater enlargement of the missionary work in Oregon. In the estimation of the meeting, “the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers were few.” They unanimously passed a resolution advising the superintendent, Jason Lee, to proceed to the United States, and lay the wants of the Indians and the settlers of Oregon before the Board and the churches, and to ask for men and means to strengthen the missionary force, and to augment missionary facilities in that distant region. The superintendent, concurring with the views of the meeting, commenced his journey to the United States in March, 1838, re-crossing the Rocky Mountains, and arriving on the frontier of Missouri about the first of September following, where he learned by an express messenger that his beloved wife and new-born son had died in Oregon, three months after he left the mission.

Arriving in New York in November, Brother Lee laid his claims before the Mission Board, and after due deliberation, and some opposition, the board resolved and made preparations for sending to Oregon five additional missionaries, one physician, six mechanics, four farmers, one steward and four female teachers; making in all thirty-six adults, with sixteen children—fifty-two as the sum total—with all kinds of tools for mechanical and agricultural purposes, and materials for the erection of a saw mill and grist mill—all of which were ready to embark on shipboard in the autumn of 1839. As may be inferred, this large reinforcement in-

volved great pecuniary expense, and increased very much the responsibility of the superintendent. The mission company arrived safely in Oregon, June 1st, 1840, and commenced very soon the active duties of missionary life, together with the enlargement of the mission premises, the cultivation of more land, and the erection of mills. How far this attempt to combine the secular with the more appropriate duties of missionary effort was wise or prudent, we are not prepared to judge; suffice it to say, that in our opinion, the original missionaries in Oregon, the Mission Board in New York, with the members of the expedition of 1839-40, were actuated by high and holy motives. It could not be expected that among so large a number of adults as now composed the Oregon Mission, there should be no diversity of opinion, or that all should think matters were conducted in the most prudent and economical manner. In 1842 and the following year, complaints were made to the board in regard to the management of the mission. At length, at a regular meeting of the board, held July 19, 1843, it was resolved that the bishop having charge of the foreign mission field, be requested to appoint a special agent to proceed to Oregon and investigate the financial concerns of the mission, or to appoint a new superintendent, in place of Rev. Jason Lee. The bishop decided on the latter course, and on looking over the entire field of Methodism at home, no man was thought so well fitted for the important and delicate task of superseding the original superintendent, as the subject of this Memoir.

The instructions to Brother Gary were few, but he was clothed with discretionary power to enlarge or contract; the destiny of missionaries, laymen, property—and indeed, all appertaining to the mission was placed in his hands—so great was the confidence reposed in his integrity and sound judgment by the bishop and the board of managers.

While Brother Gary was quietly discharging his duties as presiding elder of the Oswego District, he was informed of

his appointment to the Oregon mission. So authoritative and urgent was the call, that he hesitated not to comply with the direction of the bishop making the appointment, although had he conferred only with flesh and blood, his language, no doubt, would have been: "I pray thee, have me excused;"—but laying aside all selfish interests, and sacrificing the endearments of home associations, and the privileges of home institutions, he bade farewell to his friends, and with his lady, prepared to visit, and if need be, to lay his life down upon the wild coast of Oregon. Himself and wife left New York in the ship "*Lausanne*," Capt. Spaulding, which sailed on the 30th of November, 1843. They passed around Cape Horn about the 20th of February following, and reached Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, on the 25th of April, where they remained a week. They then took passage on board the bark "*Brothers*,"—an English vessel—and cast anchor in Baker Bay, at the mouth of the Columbia, on the 23d of May. They remained on board the vessel another week, ascending the river slowly, and finally reached Oregon City on the first of June.

On the 5th of June, Brother Gary and wife, and Brother Hines and wife, left Oregon City, and proceeded up the Wallamette river in a canoe, for the purpose of attending a meeting of the missionaries, called by the superintendent, at the house of Rev. David Leslie. The distance was fifty miles—by land, thirty; by water, twenty. They had expected to perform the journey in a day, but finding the current strong, darkness overtook them, and they were obliged to camp out for the night. For this they had made no previous preparation—had no bedding to keep them warm, and all the food they had was a piece of fresh salmon with some bread and tea, of which they partook with much relish. The next day they arrived at Brother Leslie's, and on the following day, the missionaries met together for consultation, about the affairs of the mission. Beginning at an early hour of the day, the conference continued until daylight the

next morning. At this meeting it was thought advisable to make some important changes in the operations of the mission. It was thought to be too secular. It was decided to sell the mission farm at Clatsop, at the mouth of the Columbia, and also to dismiss the laymen connected with the mission. That no injustice might be done to the latter, Brother Gary proposed to defray their expenses home, if they wished to return, or pay them an equivalent in such property as the mission owned in Oregon. They all preferred remaining, with one exception, and the mission property was distributed among them, to the amount of from eight hundred to a thousand dollars each, which measure proved entirely satisfactory to the laymen, as they were honorable to the superintendent and the board, whose representative he was. At this meeting also, Brother Gary confirmed the appointments of the preachers, which had been made at the yearly meeting, shortly before his arrival.

Brother Gary, shortly afterward—for good reasons—proposed to sell the mission school house at the upper settlement. This building was by far the best, and most sightly looking edifice in Oregon. It stood in a beautiful location, was seventy-five by forty-eight feet on the ground, three stories high, and cost eight thousand dollars. To the house was attached a farm a mile square in extent. The Catholics were very anxious to secure this property for a nunnery, and offered a reasonable sum of money for the same. Mr. Gary, however, declined the offer, and preferred selling the land and buildings to the trustees of the "Oregon Institute" for four thousand dollars—a much less sum than he could have obtained of the Catholics. The sale was accordingly made, and the history of the institution since then, and its identity with the literary and moral prosperity of Oregon, proves the wisdom of his decision in that matter.

After the transfer of the above-mentioned premises, all the remaining property of the mission was disposed of by the superintendent, principally to the laymen who had been dis-

charged from the mission, and the property thus sold amounted in value to upwards of twenty-six thousand dollars; and thus was the mission relieved of a heavy load of responsibility and care, and assumed at once a character more in accordance with its original design. The preachers, disencumbered of their secular embarrassments, gave themselves wholly to the work of the ministry, scattering themselves far and wide over that extensive territory.

No opportunity presenting itself that fall or winter for his return to the East, Brother Gary remained at his post until the following month of July, when he took passage on the ship "Brutus," Capt. Adams, bound for the Sandwich Islands, and arrived safely in the harbor of Honolulu, August 15th. Remaining here two weeks, they again embarked on board the good whale-ship, "William Hamilton," Capt. Fisher, passed around Cape Horn about the fifth of November, and arrived safely at New Bedford, Mass., January 14th, 1848, from which place he speedily returned to Central New York, having been absent on his mission a little more than four years.

Brother Gary attended the next conference, at Adams, and was received with open arms by his brethren, all hearts being made glad to see the venerable man among us again. His health, however, had become somewhat impaired by his arduous labors in his distant field, but he returned with a glad heart to the ordinary labors of the pastorate. At our conference missionary anniversary, he gave a very interesting account of the physical, social, civil and religious state of Oregon, and left an impression on the minds of all that our labors and expenditures in Oregon had not been in vain, as we all now acknowledge they have not been. At the close of the conference, he was appointed to Steuben Circuit, and provisions made for a "supply," to assist him in his work of the following year. 1847, he was stationed in Arsenal Street Church, Watertown, and at the conference of 1850, he was appointed presiding elder of Adams District, where he re-

mained two years. Preferring a station to a district, on account of his enfeebled health, he, in 1852, was appointed to Pulaski station; and in 1853, to Camden station, at which place the conference session of 1854 was held, and at which Brother Gary was obliged to take a superannuated relation for the first time in his long and laborious ministry of forty-four years. Although weak in body, the conference was favored with listening to one more sermon from this aged servant of God. No ordinary or even extraordinary occasion would have justified him in his then state of health in preaching before the conference, but a pious member of his flock had deceased, and he, as the pastor, was called upon to officiate at the funeral services. The members of the conference did not suppose that a majority of us were hearing him for the last time, but it proved to be so.

Having become much exhausted by the labor of providing for, and entertaining so large a body of ministers and visitors as attended the conference, he immediately, on its close, sought rest and retirement, but as the parsonage must be vacated in order to leave room for the family of his successor, Rev. O. M. Legate, he had necessarily the care and anxiety attending every removal of a Methodist minister from place to place. At length, he became quietly domiciled in the retired, but beautiful village of Vernon, in Oneida County, where, in the society of his highly esteemed and intelligent companion, he spent the last winter of his life.

Not until about three weeks before his death, was he confined to his room. On the 4th of March, he became much worse, and was greatly reduced, apparently from the discharge of an abscess of the liver. From this time he was a great sufferer. Occasionally he had times of sinking away, apparently beyond the possibility of recovery. He thus lingered on the very verge of life, beyond the daily expectations of his physician and friends.

Disease prayed upon his body, and wasted his physical energies steadily but surely, to the last. But his mind

continued clear, and his judgment and memory unimpaired. Perhaps some of the exact expressions he made, on different occasions, will better show his state of mind than can be done in any other way. Two considerations should be made by those not acquainted with the subject of this chapter:—1st. He was habitually diffident and moderate in speaking of his religious experience and attainments; 2d. There was through his whole sickness, a manifestation of uninterrupted patience, perfect peace, and a heavenly animation in the religious statements he made, which gave them peculiar interest. The following are a few of the many expressions made just before he left for his home, with the saints in light. His familiar friends will see that they are characteristic, and highly consoling:

“March 4th. Much worse and greatly reduced. ‘I have great comfort. My comfort is superabundant. The Lord deals very graciously with me. I have great consolation.’ Soon after this, on being asked by Rev. L. Stanley, how the work of the ministry appeared to him now, he said: ‘It is the noblest work on earth.’ Again he was asked how he viewed the sacrifices he had made in that work, he replied: ‘I have made none. I can only hide behind the cross.’ On an occasion of great distress, he said: ‘The harbor is in view, however the winds and waves may keep me out; it is desirable to enter in and be at rest. He that has given me grace hitherto, will not forsake me in this hour.’ In this frame of mind, and apparently without a cloud in his sky, he continued to suffer in body, but to triumph in spirit, till Sunday, March 25th, at half past one P. M., where he died in great peace.”

In regard to the character of this truly useful and honored minister, we will add the words of the committee on memoirs, at the next session of the conference after—the report written, if we mistake not, by Brother Gary’s old friend and fellow laborer, Rev. Gardner Baker:

“Brother Gary possessed in an eminent degree, sweetness and evenness of temper. Amid the trials, disappointments and perplexities of his itinerant life, nothing seemed

to move him. He was always calm, mild, cheerful and pleasant. The tumults that surrounded him were not permitted to enter, or move his heart. The fierce winds and raging billows on the sea of life, seemed never for a moment to endanger his bark. The circle in which he moved was rendered agreeable and inviting by his presence, and his home was brightened and sweetened by his coming. His social habits and gentle spirit made his domestic circle both attractive and happy. He was one of the safest counsellors, never precipitant, always cautious, weighing a matter well before he ventured an opinion, and firm in what appeared to him to be right. One of our bishops is said once to have remarked, that no man was better fitted for a general superintendent, (or bishop,) than Brother Gary. Thus, pleasant, agreeable, calm, deliberate, and firm, he was ready to respond to the calls of the church of his choice, to which he was so warmly attached. Unassuming, unostentatious, and unaspiring, his influence in the conference was most salutary. Placing himself on a line with the feeblest, no one would undertake to step beyond him, thus bringing upon a level, in some respects, the different members of the body. The title of D. D. had no charms for him; it was a distinction of which he did not deem himself worthy, yet in the pulpit he excelled. He never lost sight of the gravity and dignity that belonged to the sacred desk, and therefore never allowed himself to utter anything foolish or unbecoming, but his performances and language were appropriate, and in keeping with the sacredness of the place. Unwilling to prostitute the pulpit to unhallowed purposes, he aimed in the discharge of its responsible duties to guard its sacredness with unflinching fidelity. There was no attempt at display, but with simplicity of style, he commanded that true persuasive and sanctified eloquence, which moved the heart, and drew the tear. Often while he was preaching, a midnight silence and breathless attention pervaded the assembly, and then again, many a moistened eye and throbbing heart gave unmistakable evidences of the emotions within. No doubt he has many seals to his ministry, and has secured many stars in his crown of rejoicing. The loss of no member of the conference would have been more deeply felt and deplored, than that of Brother Gary. But our loss is his eternal gain."

In appearance, Brother Gary was of medium height, and well proportioned. The head and countenance would have afforded a perfect model for the sculptor. His eye was of a light blue, lit up with the fires of love and serenity. His brow indicated great firmness, while his lips seemed to have been purposely made for the utterance only of that which is true and noble. He seldom spoke in conference when not required to do so officially, as presiding elder or chairman of committees. He never attempted to get the floor when another was speaking, and however interested in any question before the body, he was not in a hurry to rise, but, waiting calmly until all others had exhausted their arguments, he would get up in his place, and with his arms folded on his breast, would, in few words and in the most dispassionate manner, express his opinion, and the conference very generally deferred to his judgment in arriving at a conclusion. Frequently also, when the conference got "befogged," as conferences sometimes will, we always looked to Brother Gary to clear the fog away and let us into clear daylight, where we could discover clearly our latitude and longitude. In a word, no man could be more respected or beloved than he.

We had prepared a much longer Memoir of our revered father in the gospel, but want of space makes it necessary to abbreviate this article.

"Our Fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?"

CHAPTER VI.

REV. ELEAZER WHIPPLE.

WE regret that we are unable to present so full a chapter on the life and character of this valuable servant of God, as his talents, his piety and usefulness seem to demand. Yet so it is, and with the most meagre amount of material out of which to compose a sketch, we proceed to our task. We first avail ourselves of a portion of an obituary written by Rev. Aaron Adams, who was one of Brother Whipple's spiritual children, and who had for many years been well acquainted with the subject of this short sketch. It embraces the earlier periods of Brother Whipple's history, as published in the *Northern Christian Advocate*, shortly after his death :

"The Rev. Eleazer Whipple, whose sudden death has already been published, was born in the state of Rhode Island, March 29th, 1785. His parents were not professors of religion. His educational advantages were quite limited.

"At the age of fifteen, he heard the Methodist preachers in the state of Connecticut, where he was laboring, and says their preaching and praying powerfully affected him. He was there converted and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He and a colored man kept up a prayer meeting in the place about six months, after which there was a powerful revival of the work of God.

"He removed to New York State, and settled in Otsego County, where he officially became a preacher of the gospel of Christ. A short time previous to his death, he said he had preached the gospel fifty years. He commenced at the age of twenty-one. When a local preacher, he labored faithfully and successfully, for many were the seals to his ministry. He was sometimes employed by the presiding elder to supply the work. When on Herkimer Circuit he thus labored, his moral courage was tested. There was a sweeping epidemic in the town of Salisbury. Sudden at-

tacks and sudden deaths were common and as fatal as the late cholera. It was believed to be contagious; yet brother Whipple visited the sick and attended the funerals to the number of seven in one week, in a small neighborhood. What he believed was duty was promptly attended to. He was always ready to pray, ready to preach and ready to die; for he often said he hoped his death would be instantaneous. This desire was granted, for he ceased at once to work and live.

"In the year 1823, he was employed on Steuben Circuit, and moved his family into the neighborhood of the writer of this obituary. His labors were greatly blessed, many were the converts. For four years the work prospered. Three traveling preachers and two local were the fruits of that revival; and though a score and a half years since, many pillars in the church from that revival are yet to be found. I was the first in that revival that was made to rejoice in the mercy of God. Though a traveling minister for twenty-six years, I have never seen the equal of that revival."

In the year 1824, Brother Whipple joined the Genesee Annual Conference, and was sent to Steuben Circuit, the scene of his labors during the previous year. Rev. Charles Giles was his presiding elder, and Rev. David A. Shepard was his junior colleague. At the same conference that Brother Whipple became a "traveling preacher," Rev. Gardner Baker and Rev. Anson Tuller also gave their names to the Genesee Conference, were received on trial, but have both followed their class-mate to the better land. It was not customary in those days to place a young man just received into conference in charge of a circuit, but Brother Whipple, by his age—thirty-nine—and his previous experience and labors, was considered well qualified for the important trust. Nor was this confidence in vain. He labored more like a veteran than as a novitiate, and, with the help of his young colleague, succeeded not only in taking care of the lambs of the flock, but in gathering others into the fold.

The following year, 1825, he was continued on trial, and appointed to the charge of Herkimer Circuit, with Brother Shepard again as his colleague. In 1826, we find him at

Sharon, in the same district, with Rev. Henry Ercanbruek as junior preacher. Here he remained one year, and at the conference of 1827, he was received into full connection—having previously been ordained as a local deacon—and was appointed again to Sharon Circuit, with Rev. John Roper as preacher in charge. In 1828, he was ordained elder, and was appointed to Little Falls Circuit, in connection with Rev. Eli W. R. Allen as his junior colleague. This year the Oneida Conference was formed by the division of the Genesee, and Brother Whipple, falling within the bounds of the former, became identified with it as a member. In 1827, he was re-appointed to Little Falls, with Brother Allen again as his colleague. In 1830, he was sent back to Sharon Circuit, where he had labored efficiently for two years previously. He this year had John Arnold for senior colleague, and George Gary for presiding elder. In 1831, we find his name attached to Canajoharie Circuit, with George Harmon as presiding elder of Chenango District. In 1832, he was returned to old Steuben, without a colleague, and the following year was appointed preacher in charge of Russia Circuit, with E. L. Wadsworth as his fellow-laborer. 1834 finds him stationed again on Herkimer Circuit, with John D. Torrey; 1835, at Vienna, with A. Waterman as colleague.

In 1836, the Oneida Conference being divided, and the Black River Conference formed, Brother Whipple became a member of the latter by virtue of location, at the time of the division. But although now a member of another conference, it does not involve his removal, for we find him returned to Vienna Circuit, with L. D. Tanner as second preacher. In 1837, he was appointed to Herkimer station, and in 1838, to Black River Circuit, with Isaac Puffer as preacher in charge. It may be proper here to remark that the Black River Charge of 1838 differed very much from the Black River Charge of 1862, (or of 1879, the present date of revising this work), both as regards size and location. Then

it was in Herkimer District, and embraced certain towns to the north of the village of Rome, in the vicinity of the Black River, including, we believe, Boonville and Turin; now the term is used to designate a small but important charge, a few miles up the river from Watertown. In 1837, the conference met at Turin, where Brother Whipple had labored the preceding year, and where he took an active part in providing homes for the preachers and visitors during their stay among that hospitable people. The author remembers with gratitude his kind host and hostess, Brother and Sister Hastings, during the session of the Turin Conference, and the many happy seasons we enjoyed in family prayer with them and their children. They lived some distance from the church, but being a young man then, we thought it no hardship to go a few miles away from the church to find accommodations among warm-hearted Christians. We have sometimes feared that our younger brethren in the conference were growing fastidious in this matter, as too many of them really feel injured if they are not provided for within a very short distance of the conference room, forgetting that it is almost always impossible to accommodate all, both old and young, with boarding places so near as might under other circumstances be desirable. At the first conference we ever attended, our host lived four miles from the village; this distance we frequently walked twice and even four times in a day during the conference session, but an acquaintance was formed with that kind family, the family of Brother Samuel Parker, of Potsdam, which has long since ripened into friendship and Christian affection.

But to return to the subject of our sketch. At the conference of 1839, Brother Whipple was appointed to the charge of Trenton Circuit, with Rev. Elisha Wheeler as his colleague. In 1840, he was stationed on Marcy Circuit; in 1841, on old Herkimer Circuit again, with Almanzo Blackman as his colleague; in 1842, on North Manlius Cir-

cuit, with Josiah Arnold; in 1843 on Cleveland Circuit, to which he was returned the following year. In 1845, he was sent to Clay Circuit, to which he was also re-appointed the following year. In 1847, he was stationed on Van Buren Circuit; 1848, same charge; 1849, on Newport Circuit, with Rev. John Slee as preacher in charge; 1850, same charge, with Rev. Franklin Hawkins as preacher in charge; 1851, Martinsburgh; 1825, same charge; 1853, returned to Marcy Circuit, and in 1854, he was entered on the superannuated list, having been permitted in the good providence of God, to give over fifty years of his life to the active duties of the ministry.

But, although partially laid aside because of his increasing age and infirmities, Brother Whipple could not remain inactive. Labor he must—and labor he did, visiting and preaching from place to place, wherever a door opened. After his superannuation, he took a charge in Ava, under the presiding elder, and, in 1855, he was continued on the superannuated list, but accepted an appointment under the presiding elder, Rev. B. Holmes, to supply the pulpit of the new Second M. E. Church, in the village of Rome, where he spent the remainder of his days in preaching Christ and him crucified.

In the month of February following, he, with his wife, went on a visit to his old friend and fellow-laborer—his son in the gospel—Rev. Aaron Adams, who resided a few miles from Rome. On the afternoon of the 19th of that month, at about two o'clock, he took a shovel in his hand for the purpose of removing some snow from the barn door, and staying longer than was anticipated, a girl was sent to see what had become of him, who found him lying upon the snow a lifeless corpse. To all appearances, he was in usual health when he left the house; but how swift, in his case, the passage from time to eternity! truly it may be said of him: "He ceased at once to work and live!" Thus died Eleazer Whipple, on the 19th day of February, 1856, he be-

ing in the 71st year of his age, the 50th of his ministry, and having been connected with the annual conference thirty-two years.

Brother Whipple was twice married, his last wife—formerly the widow Stebbins—still survives him. She was his co-laborer for more than twenty years of his ministerial life, sharing patiently in all the toils and burdens and sacrifices of the itinerancy. Rev. Lorenzo D. Stebbins, A. M., formerly of the Black River, but for some years an influential member of the Troy Conference, is her son, as is also the Hon. J. W. Stebbins, of Rochester, N. Y. Brother Whipple left four children, all of whom, we believe, yet survive.

The author had not the pleasure of an intimate personal acquaintance with Brother Whipple; our fields of labor having always been distant from each other; and meeting each other only at our conference sessions, but little opportunity was afforded for an intimate acquaintance; yet, from what we saw of him and had learned of him, we are prepared to draw the following inferences as to his character and usefulness:

1st. He was a man of deep piety—soundly converted, inside and outside, by which we mean his heart was renewed, and his life outwardly corresponded with his inward spiritual state. He was a Christian in all respects—not, perhaps, without his imperfections—but keeping the love of Christ and of souls predominantly in his heart, he felt continually a burning desire for the honor of the one, and the salvation of the other. This prompted him to consider not his own life dear unto him, if he might win souls to Christ.

2d. He was a sound, conscientious Methodist, doctrinally and practically. He was well posted in theological matters, whether in regard to Arminism, Calvinism or Socinian views. He had read extensively the works of Wesley, Fletcher, Watson and other Methodist divines; but better than all, he had read his Bible through, perhaps not less than one hundred times. Rev. Aaron Adams relates of him that

at a grove meeting, more than thirty years before his death, he heard him say that he had read the Bible through forty times! No wonder, then, that Brother Whipple was sound in doctrine, and having taken the Bible as the man of his counsel, it is no marvel that his life and conversation were in accordance with the doctrines he professed.

3d. As a preacher, Brother Whipple was far above mediocrity. The fact of his return the second year to the most of his charges; and then again, his being sent, after a few years, to charges he had served before—which the reader will have noticed frequently took place—is an evidence that the people appreciated his labors among them, and did not grow tired of his services; and even in his declining years, when old age had silvered his locks, and his many toils and exposures had affected his nervous system, his appointment to this or the other charge was generally hailed by the people with approbation, if not with delight. His sermons were doctrinal and practical, and he sought rather to do his hearers good, than

“To spread a sounding name abroad.”

4th. As a scholar, Brother Whipple was not preëminent—indeed, he was somewhat deficient in his knowledge and application of the rules of language. His early advantages were limited, and as he entered while quite young upon the duties of a preacher, and without that previous mental training which is now considered indispensable to a successful prosecution of the work of the ministry, he retained in a great measure through life those habits of thought and expression which characterized his early days. His friend, Brother Adams, further says of him: “His preaching was fervent and forcible, his ideas clearly expressed and easily understood—though the critic would see deficiencies in his grammar, and his words were not always pronounced according to Webster; but, notwithstanding these deficiencies, he was a preacher that was well received, and certainly a very

successful one. Thousands will bless the day that they sat under his ministry."

5th. As a member of the conference, he was greatly and deservedly beloved by his brethren, who had the utmost confidence in his piety and integrity. He was far from being obtrusive in his attempts to direct or control conference action; indeed, his voice was seldom heard in debate, and although always taking a deep interest in every measure where the honor or usefulness of the church was concerned, he preferred to express his assent or dissent by his silent vote rather than by discussion. Hence, he never wearied the conference with long declamations or prepared speeches; if he felt it his duty to speak at all, it would be in a few spicy remarks, "striking the nail on the head," and there leave the subject to the animadversion of others. Being one of the "fathers" in the conference, he was inclined to be somewhat on the alert, watching against innovations that threatened the perpetuity or prosperity of Methodism. He was a Methodist of the "old school," if such a term may be allowed—and as such, was rather conservative than otherwise in his views of modern reforms and attempts at moral improvement. In the language of Brother Adams: "He looked with jealousy on any proposal of reform in the economy of the Methodist Church, and was pained at the public controversies of Methodist ministers. Any management to secure the office of presiding elder, or a seat in the general conference, was sure to draw tart remarks from him. Any effort to make a display in sermons, at conference, or other places, was very offensive to him. In his speeches at conference, he was sometimes severe and sarcastic, perhaps faulty in this respect. Brother Whipple was highly esteemed by his neighbors, always ready to grant a favor, and to sympathize with the afflicted—but his race of three score years and ten are ended. The grave, which he often said had no gloom to him, has received his mortal body, and his spirit has gone to God who gave it. "The fathers, where are they, and the prophets, do they live forever?"

His death, though sudden, was to him the messenger of peace—"the gate to endless joy." We have heard it remarked of him, that he often expressed the wish that when he died, he hoped to die suddenly.

"His body with his charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live."

In this respect, his wishes—for aught we know, his prayers—were answered. To him the prophetic declaration was fulfilled: "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be." With none near him to close his dying eye—with no ear to listen to the last ejaculatory prayer, he fell—he died; but being dead, by a long life of faith and holy obedience, he yet speaketh to his sons in the gospel, and says in language not to be misunderstood: "Be thou a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, rightly dividing the word of truth." May his mantle of piety, charity and zeal fall upon his younger and surviving brethren!

CHAPTER VII.

REV. JOHN B. COCAGNE.*

JEAN BAPTISTE COCAGNE, the subject of this memorial, was born October 1st, 1821, in the village of Rosiere, diocese of Besançon, France. His parents being members of the Roman Catholic Church, presented him at a very early age to the proper officers of the church, that he might receive the rite of Christian baptism, his godfather and

* In the preparation of this Memoir, the author is largely indebted to a little work written and published by Brother Cocagne, while laboring on the French Mission, in New York city, entitled, "*The Christian Experience of a Roman Catholic, Converted to the Religion of the Bible, and Addressed to his Roman Catholic Friends.*" Also to the respected widow, Mrs. Permelia J. Cocagne, for some interesting facts not found in that work.

mother standing as sponsors for him. After arriving at a proper age, no pains were spared by his devoted mother to instil into the mind of her child the principles of religion, as believed in and taught by the Romish church. Hence in early life he was taught the "*Pater Noster*," Our Father, the "*Ave Maria*," Hail Mary, the Confession, the Creed, and sundry short prayers to his patron saint, John the Baptist.

In early youth, he was sent to the village school, which in all Catholic countries is more or less under the patronage and supervision of the priesthood. Here he was taught the catechism of the church, and such was his proficiency in his studies, that he was selected to wait upon the priest at the altar. Young John being arrayed in his sacred vestments—the long white gown and black cap—took great delight, as such boys will do, in discharging what to him and others appeared as very important duties, while at the same time he was taught that the priest was a person of great sanctity of character, and also possessed of unlimited power and authority.

When John was ten years of age, his father, who was in humble circumstances, emigrated to the United States, and after landing in the harbor of New York, he with his family proceeded to, and took up his residence in or near the village of Cape Vincent, Jefferson County, New York. In a few months after their arrival, there being several Roman Catholic families in the place, a priest made them a visit, and soon after Bishop Dubois, of New York, visited them, at which time the subject of this Memoir was duly confirmed according to the rites of the church. He also was inducted into his former office of waiting on the priest before the altar. In the year 1822, Mr. LeRay, proprietor of an extensive tract of land in that section, erected a commodious church for the benefit of a large number of French and German families, who had settled on his lands, at which, John, as a matter of course, became a constant attendant. But while engaged in his sacred duties of attend-

ing church and waiting at the altar in the forenoon of the Sabbath, the remainder of the day and evening, was usually spent in card-playing and dancing, and even between the exercises in the church, he with his companions would often play ball, or nine-pins, a practice which is quite common in all Catholic countries, and in none more so than in France.

For about six years after the erection of the church above alluded to, young John had not attended any protestant meeting. He thought it a sin to do so; neither would his parents allow it. At length curiosity overcame all scruples and parental authority; unknown to his parents, he with some youthful companions ventured to attend a Presbyterian meeting. Having, however, heard of the shouting Methodists, they determined still further to learn something of Methodist protestantism. The members of the church, where they happened to attend in the first instance, were a godly, zealous class, and as is usual in some places in Methodist worship, they rejoiced aloud; some wept and some shouted, so that John and his companions could not account for such strange doings, but on the whole concluded that "some of them must be deluded, some mad, and the rest crazy." After having attended Methodist meetings a few times, he and others determined to have a Methodist meeting of their own. Time and place were appointed, John was selected as the preacher, while arrangements were made for some to groan, others to shout, and the rest to "fall by the power," one by one, upon the floor. Accordingly John took his stand in one corner of the room, behind a chair, and commenced the exercises. Soon there was an abundance of groans, and shouts, and glory hallelujahs, and falling on the floor, until all at length were prostrate. When rising again they would repeat the same, working until tired of their exercise, or ashamed of their conduct, they would retire.

Strange as it may seem to many, it was while thus trifling with, and mocking at sacred things, that the spirit of God

awakened the mind of John to a sense of his lost condition as a sinner. Though apparently cheerful while with his companions, there were seasons when away from them, or while alone, that his conscience gave him no rest. "More than once," he says, "did I go to my father's farm alone in the evening behind a stump, to weep like Peter, for my sins. At times I fell upon my knees, extended my arms, held a stone in each hand, as a voluntary penance to find pardon before God. At such times I would have been ready to make a long pilgrimage to Palestine to ease my conscience, or like the poor, deluded flagellants, to lacerate my body. It may be I would be willing to suffer crucifixion, * * * * for my edification and that of my friends."

While his spirit was thus weighed down with a sense of his depravity and sins, he had not sufficient light to enable him to see his way to the cross, where his burden of sin might have been laid down at the feet of Jesus, but he still groveled in darkness and despair, not knowing where or how to find relief.

About this time he was apprenticed by his father to learn the tailor's trade. His master, engaging in the unfortunate Canada rebellion of 1838, was captured and imprisoned. Soon he found another master whose house was a home for Methodist itinerants, who frequently visited the shop and talked with the workmen in regard to the salvation of their souls. Among other ministers who labored to secure the spiritual well-being of Brother Cocagne, he mentions with gratitude the Rev. Wm. Tripp and the Rev.

Ira H. Corbin. He heard these men of God preach several times, and frequently was bathed in tears under the preaching of the Word, but still clung to his romantic ideas in regard to the way and plan of salvation. An opportunity presenting itself, he attended a protracted meeting held by the Presbyterians, when he became better acquainted with the doctrines of the Bible, as taught by protestants. He, however, remained a staunch and unyielding catholic, until

at length, by attending prayer meetings among the Methodists, he became deeply convinced of sin and was led to seek for mercy where only it may be found.

The narrative of his experience in his transition state, from Romanism to protestantism, and from nature to grace, is so interesting that we will give it in nearly his own words :

"I attended the prayer meetings very regularly. Some gave glory to God as if they felt it ; and others with tearful eyes groaned for redemption through the merits of Christ. Many humbled themselves like the ancient Ninevites in sackcloth and ashes. For my part I felt convinced of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. But my object was still to be a Roman Catholic. I well remember the Thursday evening before the quarterly meeting. To me it was a terrible one. The people rejoiced and sang praises to God ; but my mind was much troubled on account of my sins. My young friend, F. Smith, who sat on my left in the meeting, arose and earnestly requested an interest in the prayers of Christians. He had no sooner recovered his seat, than the spirit of God knocked at the latched door of my heart for admittance. Such a new and strange feeling, I had never experienced in my life * * * * Like Belshazzar, I shook, and could not interpret this strange sensation. Being afraid to find myself upon the floor, I grasped the seat beneath me with both hands, and held on until the spirit of God left me. All this time fears were entertained lest some one would mistrust what were my troubles.

"The meeting being closed, I hastened home to take a retrospect of what was done during that memorable evening. While meditating upon my past life, my mind was filled with anguish, and my eyes with tears. Not a soul knew my feelings and prospects. That night can never be forgotten. Friday morning dawned upon happy beings, but not so upon me. My daily labors were commenced, but my mind was not on my work. The day glided over my head like a frightful dream, my mind became dark as midnight, and hard like adamant. The evening shades came on, fit emblems of my soul. Again, what was taught me in childhood and youth came before me on the one hand, and what I had heard, and felt, and seen that week,

on the other. I remembered hearing Presbyterians and Methodists preach some of the same doctrines as are advocated by Roman Catholic priests ; and why those would not save among protestants, as well as among them, was a profound mystery to me. I longed to know the reason why the same causes would not produce the same effects. Their conduct was certainly that of pious people, and yet, according to the books, (Romanist,) they were the children of satan, lost without remedy, and in the broad road to perdition."

In this mighty struggle of mind he continued during the remainder of the week, sometimes verging toward Deism and Atheism, and at other times hoping against hope. On Saturday, the quarterly meeting for the circuit was held, presided over by Rev. A. J. Phelps. John was there, but found no relief. At the prayer meeting in the evening, his convictions were deepened and his purposes strengthened, to seek the Lord. "On Sabbath morning, I resolved again, live or die, prosperity or adversity, friends or foes, smiles or frowns, heaven or hell, to use all the means within my reach to obtain salvation. The love feast, the first I had ever witnessed, commenced, and continued in the spirit. Such praying and speaking, such singing and shouting, loudly invited me to join the chorus of praise, but I could not. My lips had not yet been touched with a live coal from the altar of God, I needed an anointing from the spirit of God to engage in such a holy work. What pen can describe my emotions and my prospects then ! Angels might reveal to your mind my anguish, but it is beyond my descriptive powers. As light began to shine upon my mind, I saw the more clearly my wretched condition. The bread and water were passed while some gave glory to God, but instructed as I had been I knew not what to do. Raising the head I glanced over the congregation to see if any of my Roman Catholic friends were present, who, like spies, would be likely to circulate the story ; but observing none, I ventured to partake of the bread and water ; I felt sure of

losing the favor of friends and relations, and these were not easily given up. During the love feast I partially arose many times, to express my feelings and desires ; but the devil was yet hanging like a great weight to the skirts of my coat, and would not let me speak. After a short intermission, Rev. A. J. Phelps preached to the edification of many, though not to me. The last ray of hope dimly shown upon the horizon of my mind, like a light at night upon a distant hill, declaring in a way not to be misunderstood, this is your last offer of mercy—take and eat or you die.”

In this way did our worthy friend groan under the burden of sin and guilt. He felt like a criminal bound with chains in a dreary dungeon, looking every moment for the execution of the sentence of death. Becoming convinced that works could not save him ; that no supplications to the virgin, or saints, or angels, could rescue him ; that father, mother, sisters, brothers, friends, must all be given up ; that Jesus is the only refuge for the sinner, he made up his mind that live or die, he would venture his all on Christ at the communion table. Sore was the conflict, severe was the struggle, great was the sacrifice, but grace triumphed, and in the act of partaking of the sacred symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood, and while offering up in the French language a short prayer to God, heaven-born peace filled his heart, his tongue was loosened to shout aloud the praises of God, and John lived in a new world. The New Jerusalem had indeed descended from God out of heaven, and he was happy, for he had the witness within, that God had accepted him for the sake of Jesus.

Nor did the effects of his conversion to real Christianity end with mere rapture or spiritual emotion. His life, his deportment, as well as his moral nature were changed, so that his parents and former associates were free to admit that John was a different person from what he had been, although they concluded the change had been wrought, not by the spirit of goodness, but by the power of satan, through

the instrumentality of protestant heretics! His father, indeed, was so much offended when John first announced to him what great things God had done for his soul, that he sternly repelled him, with a weapon in his hand. His son, however, while retreating from the ire of his father, boldly preached Christ to him, and affectionately invited him to become a partaker of this common salvation.

Being repulsed by his father, he returned to Mr. Little, his employer. Two hours had scarcely elapsed, however, when his mother and brother came to take him home, declaring that he should remain with Mr. Little no longer. The latter, however, very properly refused to relinquish his claim upon his services, and his mother—kind and affectionate, but deceived and deluded—returned home with a heavy heart, and thus was John left in the care of a kind, Christian family, to the enjoyment of his religious privileges. The glorious change, above described, occurred on the first Sabbath of December, 1839.

As is the case with every truly converted soul, Brother Cocagne now felt it his duty to declare to others what God had done for his soul, both in private and in public. But in attempting to discharge his duty in public, he was sorely tempted and tried. His youth, his comparative ignorance, his imperfect manner of expressing himself in the English language, were suggested to his mind as so many reasons why he should not speak in the public prayer-meeting. Yielding temporarily to these suggestions, his mind became cloudy, until he firmly resolved that he would, at all hazards, be a witness for his Lord in every meeting and at every fitting opportunity—a promise which he ever afterward faithfully fulfilled.

His friends, however, that he had forsaken for Christ's sake were determined, if possible, to reclaim him from his supposed heretical views and associations. To this end, interviews between him and certain Roman priests were planned—discussions with them were had for hours together

—mobs frequently threatened him, and the deluded victims of a superstitious faith often gnashed upon him with their teeth, hoping, either by persuasion, arguments, or by threats, to reclaim him from his supposed errors—but all in vain!—he knew in whom he had believed, and like a veteran soldier of the cross, he turned aside the weapons of his enemies.

Shortly after his conversion, Brother Cocagne united with the M. E. Church as a probationer; the New Testament became the book of books to him—by day and by night, at labor or at rest, his mind was dwelling upon the sublime truths found in the inspired volume. Soon he felt that it was his duty to call dying sinners to repentance. This impression of duty was deep-seated in his soul—waking or sleeping, his mind was absorbed in that deeply momentous subject—like others who have been called to the holy ministry, he endeavored to stifle conviction and to plead sundry excuses; still the voice from heaven seemed to cry “go preach.” Being thus troubled by a sense of duty on the one hand, and a desire to escape the responsibilities of the ministerial office on the other, he often resolved to open his mind to his pastor on the subject, but as often did his courage fail him whenever the attempt was made. He, however, continued to labor with and for his employer, thus fulfilling his obligation. But while learning his trade he diligently employed his spare time in study and in attending class and other religious meetings, in and near Cape Vincent.

The term of his apprenticeship having expired, he next resolved to attend school and secure if possible a proper education. His father learning that he designed attending a protestant school, became opposed to his design, and made him sundry offers to set him up in business, on the relinquishment of such design; but the young disciple had made a solemn promise to his Heavenly Father, which he did not feel at liberty to violate. He might have attended a Roman Catholic seminary and been aided in the

work of preparation to become a catholic priest, an office for which his mother from his infancy had designed him, but to all these offers he conscientiously turned a deaf ear, and made all possible preparation for pursuing his studies at the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary.

We now begin to trace an interesting period in the history of the young Cocagne. On the 23d of April, 1842, with only fifteen dollars in his pocket, he bade his friends farewell, designing to pursue a four years' course at the above named institution. Traveling on foot, two days brought him to the village of Gouverneur, where all were entire strangers to him, excepting the kind family of Rev. R. Reynolds, with whom he took up his abode for the first quarter. To defray his expenses for board and tuition, he worked, when not at study, at his trade. Speaking of his pursuit of knowledge under these difficulties, he says: "My labors were truly great, but I had a mind to work. My expenses for more than three years were over four hundred dollars, but all was paid within that time. Now and then the prospects for work were dark, but in some unexpected way garments were brought in to be made. Some could only pay me by my taking a new wheelbarrow, another a sink, another a French bedstead, and others maple sugar; but all these articles were turned on my board and kept me at school. The vacations were spent at father's house in doing their winter's sewing and in reaping the golden harvest. While at home many were the battles we had on Romanism, and the offers made to send me to their seminary." All these and other offers, though received without disdain, were rejected as being incompatible with his sense of duty.

While attending school at Gouverneur, the society in that place imposed on him the duties of steward, exhorter, and local preacher. Here he spent some of the happier days of his life, and received many tokens of kindness from the citizens of that place. He mentions particularly his obli-

gations to Mr. Myron Cushman, with whom he boarded for nearly two years. At the close of his third year at Gouverneur, at the solicitation of the former principal, Rev. A. W. Cummings, he resolved to attend the Fairfield Academy. His pecuniary prospects were not very flattering, as he had but a dollar and twenty-five cents, with which to commence the academic year. However, by close application to study and to his trade, he did not fail in meeting his expenses. Having succeeded thus far in acquiring an education, he now determined to enter into business that he might gain more experience, and secure some pecuniary means, before entering fully upon his ministerial duties; but his pastor and his presiding elder, the late Rev. A. D. Peck, advised him to enter at once the traveling connection.

Being properly recommended by the quarterly conference, he was—June, 1846,—received as a probationer by the Black River Conference, and appointed to the East Canada Creek Circuit, in Herkimer County, New York, with Rev. Allen Castle as his senior colleague. At the close of his first year in conference, he was married by Rev. Benj. I. Diefendorf, to Miss Pamela J. Robinson, of Gouverneur, on the 25th of June, 1847. At the conference this year he was appointed as junior preacher on Lee Circuit, with Rev. Anson Fuller as his fellow laborer. At the following session of the conference, having passed a creditable examination, he was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Janes, his ordination taking place July 9th. The two following years were spent on what is called Three Mile Bay Circuit, where he enjoyed an extensive revival of religion as the result of his labors, and where he received more than fifty on probation. On the 30th day of June, 1850, having fully completed his four years preparation for the full office of the ministry, he was solemnly set apart to the office and work of an elder, by the venerable Bishop Waugh, and received from him an appointment to Heuvelton and Depeyster Circuit, where he labored efficiently for one year.

The following year, he received an appointment to the French mission, in the city of New York, where he labored ardently for the conversion of his countrymen, for three years. He preached to them in the French language, visited from house to house, from garret to cellar, in places of respectability and in places of filthiness, meeting with much opposition and frequent threats from those for whose benefit he was laboring; relieving the wants of the sick and the destitute—his work was truly a missionary work, in the heart of the great commercial metropolis of America. How much success he had in this unpromising field of labor, eternity alone will disclose. At the close of his third year on the French mission, he was appointed to Harlem in May, 1854, where he remained but one year, and was then transferred back to his own conference—the Black River—and received an appointment to Chateaugay. Here the writer became more familiarly acquainted with Brother Cocagne and his worthy companion, and, as his presiding elder, had the opportunity to learn in what estimation he was held by the people of his charge. He met with a warm and hearty reception when first going on to the charge. He endeared himself to the people, and the people were endeared to him; but even here, where there is a large catholic population, he met with much opposition. The catholic priest had warned his congregation against the apostate and heretic, and ordered them, if Brother Cocagne should go into any of their houses, to “kick him out!” As the result of such *pious* counsels, his life was often threatened, and on one occasion, the dupes of the priest attempted to put their threats into execution. Some of them, one day, meeting a gentleman, riding in a sulky, and supposing him to be the heretic minister, they stopped him, knocked his horse down, dragged the supposed subject of their spite from his carriage, and were about to give him a martyr’s death, when one of their number discovered to his dismay that it was not the *minister* but the *doctor* they were handling so roughly! So great was the out-

rage upon the person of the unsuspecting physician, that the perpetrators thereof were committed to the jail in Malone, and fined seventy dollars each.

In consequence of the appointment of Rev. Thomas Carter, of the Detroit French mission, to a mission in South America, Brother Cocagne—in January, 1856—was selected as a proper person to supply the place thus left vacant. He left his charge with great regret, as well on the part of the people as himself, for he had endeared himself to his flock while he had remained with them. A long journey in mid-winter is not very pleasant, but obedient to the desires of his superiors, he cheerfully left his pleasant home in Chateaugay, and with his wife and son went again among strangers, as well as to an uninviting field of labor. In Detroit his labors were very arduous. His time was mostly spent in visiting and bestowing personal labor on the French population. Here he met with great opposition, as did his predecessor before him, and to add to his discouragements, but little fruit of his labor appeared. Accordingly, in September of that year, the Michigan Conference wisely resolved to discontinue the mission as a French mission, and to connect it with the English work. Brother Cocagne, being thus relieved from the French work, and preferring his own conference to any other, he was at his own request re-transferred to the Black River Conference.

It being near the middle of the conference year with us, and having declined somewhat in health, Brother Cocagne resolved to spend the time anterior to the ensuing session of conference, in making a visit to his native place, in France. He accordingly shipped his household goods to Ogdensburg, and brought his family among his friends. Before leaving on his voyage, he learned that his goods, shipped as above, together with his select and valuable library, were lost by the burning of the boat, just as she was entering port. This loss, however, great as it was, did not deter him from attempting the execution of his plan of visiting his native

shores. Accordingly, he embarked on board the French steamship "Lyonnais," and sailed from the harbor of New York on the first day of November, 1856, bound for Havre, France. On the night of the following day, (the 22nd), the "Lyonnais" collided with a large ship, about sixty miles east of Nantucket light-house. The steamer immediately sprung a leak, and was with difficulty kept from sinking during the night. Next day, it having become evident that the vessel must go down, the small boats were launched, a raft was constructed, and the passengers and crew abandoned the wreck. Out of a large number of souls on board only eighteen of the number were rescued from a watery grave. Six small boats loaded with passengers, together with the raft, have never been heard from. Our brother was among the missing ones, and in all probability found his grave in ocean's bed; but at what time, or where in the wide expanse of waters—except as before described—no one living knows.*

Nor is it material, where, or how, or when, the good man meets his fate—if sin is destroyed in the heart, the sting of sin, which is death, is taken away; and whether in the city full, the barren waste, the boundless prairie, the mountain summit, the cheerless dungeon, or in the ocean's depths, the Christian falls, from either place it is just as near to heaven—the only home of the pious. True, to surviving friends it would be satisfactory to know where the bones of our kindred are laid, but this satisfaction is but temporary, as *our* bodies will soon mingle with the dust that shall cover them, or be, like others, in a place unknown. It is more consoling to the Christian heart to know that our deceased friends were prepared to cross the river of death, ere they took their departure—and on this point our brother, before his separation from his beloved companion and his only child, gave unmis-

* His death is supposed to have occurred Nov. 2d, 1856, and is so entered in the conference minutes.

takable evidence of his preparation for death. His last words to his weeping wife were: "Cheer up, my wife!—give your fears to the winds, and trust in our Heavenly Father. It is doubtful if we shall meet again, and difficult to tell what may be the result of my visit to my native country; but about this I do not inquire. God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things." Being accompanied to the boat by some friends in New York, a Brother Foster congratulated him on selecting a vessel so strong, so well-built, so well-manned, and where everything was in such perfect order. Brother Cocagne replied that an old rickety vessel might cross the ocean with as much safety, and that there is no safety but in God. A sister, on bidding him farewell, expressed her fears that he would never return. To her he said: "Sister Raynor, if I never return, remember my home is above," pointing his finger to the sky; and on the morning he left home, he told his wife that he would as soon his bones would be in the ocean as any where else, if it was the will of God, and that he had no fear of death, let him meet it where he might. The last text of scripture he preached from was no doubt significant of his state of mind at that time—2 Tim., i, 12: "For I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

The character of Brother Cocagne may be summed up in a few words. In stature our brother was below the medium height, with an open, frank, animated countenance. He was quick in his movements, rapid in his enunciation, and evinced in a large degree the national vivacity of the French people. His appearance was prepossessing, and in manner and address he was a gentleman. As a scholar, if not as erudite and well versed in classical knowledge as many, he nevertheless manifested that he had more than a common school education. In the French and English languages he was well versed, had a respectable knowledge of Latin, some knowledge of Greek, and the reports of his examinations at

conference prove that in all the branches of the conference course of study, both literary and theological, he had made more than ordinary proficiency.

As a minister he was useful and acceptable to the people. In his sermons there was a rich vein of original thought, and much original expression. He spoke the English language not only correctly and grammatically, but fluently and gracefully. His manner in the pulpit was animated, and while he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, he nevertheless loved occasionally to pay his respects to *Mother Rome*, and to hold her up to the scorn and contempt of his hearers. It was no doubt in part owing to his frequent pungent thrusts at the errors of the Romish church, that he awakened the ire of the priests and others; while the mere fact of his once having been a catholic, and having become a protestant, was of itself sufficient to excite hostility on the part of the bigoted and intolerant among the papists. To his protestant hearers he was always acceptable, and if not as successful on the two French missions, where he spent the greater part of the latter years of his life, it was owing more to the nature and difficulties of the work itself, than to his want of adaptation for that particular kind of work.

In reference to his piety there can be no doubt. His sorrowing companion who may be allowed to speak on this point, says in a letter to the author :

“My husband was a living Christian, a good companion, ever kind and affectionate, always cheerful and happy, a good provider for his family and a loving father.”

Brother Cocagne left an only child, John H. B. Cocagne, on whom may the mantle of his father fall!

In the conference of which he was a member and in connection with which he died, Brother Cocagne will long be remembered for his virtues and excellency of Christian character. His ministerial deportment was unexceptionable, and when last called from among us to labor on a more

distant field, we parted with him with regret, while we fondly hoped to enjoy the benefit of his services and the pleasure of his society again ; but his work was but short, and if we see him again, it will be when the seas shall have given up their dead that are in them, and the pure and the holy shall come from the East and the West, and the North and the South, from mountain top and ocean's depth, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VIII.

REV. IRA H. CORBIN.*

IRA H. CORBIN was born in the town of Russia, Herkimer County, New York, on the 1st day of September, 1812. His parents were not wealthy, so far as it relates to earthly treasures, but they possessed that treasure, the price of which is above rubies, and is better far than gold or silver—the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto them, a circumstance which produced a sanctifying effect on the minds of their children, and especially on the mind of the youthful Ira, who, referring in his journal to the unpretending piety of his parents, says :

“The little boys, as we were called, were the subjects of special prayer, evening and morning at the family altar ; and oh ! how often did my heart swell within me and tears course down my cheeks during these memorable periods of devotion.”

When he was six years of age, his father removed his

* We tender our acknowledgements to Mrs. Jane P. Sayles, of Bridgeport, N. Y., (late widow Corbin), for her promptness in furnishing matters of information for this Memoir of her former husband.

residence to Jefferson County, and settled near the village of Depauville. The County of Jefferson, and especially that portion of it where Mr. Corbin located his family, was at that period—1818—comparatively new and in a primeval wilderness state, consequently religious and educational privileges were not as great then as now; books were scarce, and even had there been an abundance of them, the pioneer settlers found so much to do in clearing up their land and in securing a support for their families, as to leave but little time either to themselves or children, for extensive reading or study; schools were few and far between, and, as a matter of necessity almost, the mind of the child was left untutored and untrained, the effect of which, in nearly every case, is seen in mature life, and was no more apparent in the case of our brother when he had entered public life, than it was earnestly deplored by him.

But new, and in many respects uninviting, as was the region of country where our brother spent the years of his boyhood, the small colony of four families, including that of Mr. Corbin, could not long content themselves without the means of grace, and especially the preaching of the Word. The Methodist itinerant of those days, ever on the watch for souls, penetrated the forests, and wherever a hamlet was found, the glad tidings of salvation were brought to the hut of the early settler, and many a strong man bowed himself with tears at the foot of the cross, and acknowledged himself a disciple of Jesus Christ. At that period there were but four circuits embraced within the present Black River Conference territorial limits, viz: Herkimer, Sandy Creek, Black River and Watertown. On the latter circuit John Dempster was stationed in the year 1818, and to him and his successors in the itinerant work is the cause of Methodism largely indebted for its present success and important position among the churches of this part of our Lord's vineyard.

By whose special instrumentality Brother Corbin was

made the subject of awakening and converting grace, we are not informed, as his journal is silent on this point. At the age of eighteen, however, he gave his youthful heart to God, and received the witness of his adoption. This, he informs us in his journal, occurred on the 1st day of October, 1830. At this period the number of charges within the present limits of the conference had increased to twenty-eight. A society or class had for some years existed at Depauville, and soon after young Ira's conversion he united with the same as a probationer. The next year, his brethren discovering the elements of usefulness in him, and being satisfied with his Christian deportment, through the proper authority gave him an exhorter's license. He sustained the humble, but honorable and useful relation of exhorter, for the four following years, at the expiration of which time he received by vote of the quarterly conference, from the hand of Rev. John Dempster, a license to preach the gospel—which occurred in September, 1835. In the following month he was united in matrimony to Miss Elvira Kean, with whom he lived happily till death removed the wife and mother to the land of spirits.

For three years, Brother Corbin served the church in the capacity of a local preacher, giving all the time he could spare from his business to the work of calling sinners to repentance. In 1839, he was employed by the then presiding elder of Gouverneur District, to labor on Cape Vincent Circuit, in connection with Rev. Wm. Tripp. At the close of this year he was recommended by the quarterly conference of Clayton as a proper person to receive deacon's orders, and also to be received on trial in the traveling connection. Accordingly, at the next session of the Black River Conference, in Pulaski, he was elected to deacon's orders, and ordained by Bishop Roberts. He was also received on trial and appointed as junior preacher to Williamstown Circuit, having Rev. John W. Jones for his senior colleague. Shortly after conference, the health of

Brother Jones having failed, Brother Corbin was left alone to supply the appointments on that laborious charge, which he did to the best of his ability, and to the satisfaction of the people.

While laboring thus in the vineyard of the Lord, he with his parents were greatly afflicted by the death of his youngest brother. Sympathizing with his bereaved father and mother, and believing it to be his duty to be near them and to administer to their wants, in their old age, he resolved for the time being to leave the itinerant field and return to secular employments. Hence, at the session of the conference held in Rome, 1840, Brother Corbin, at his own request, was discontinued. It is proper to observe here, that this step was taken in opposition to the earnest pleadings of his wife, she believing that it was his duty to remain in connection with the conference. It was not long before he became convinced that his wife's views were correct, and that the step he had taken was hasty and ill-advised. He remarks: "I have only to regret that I did not heed her advice. I soon saw my mistake, but it was too late to recall the act, or to retrace my steps."

He continued in his local relation until 1848, eight precious years of his life having thus been partially lost to the church. His mind, however, was ill at ease. A voice kept calling to him day after day, and year after year: "Go work in my vineyard!" His nature shrank from the task. He dreaded the toils, the responsibilities, the trials and sacrifices of an itinerant minister. Still duty called, still conscience upbraided; the conflict was severe, but grace triumphed over nature, and he fully resolved in the strength of God, that cost what it might, he would spend his latest breath in crying "Behold the Lamb!" He accordingly offered his services to the church and was employed by Rev. Lewis Whitcomb, presiding elder of Watertown District, to supply a vacancy on Natural Bridge Circuit. Having faithfully and acceptably served this charge one year, he

was recommended by the quarterly conference for elder's orders, and also for admission on trial. He was accordingly ordained elder by Rev. Bishop Hedding, at Fulton, was received on trial again, and re-appointed to Natural Bridge. At the next session of conference he was continued on trial, after having passed a satisfactory examination in the usual course of study, and received his appointment to Morristown. In relation to this appointment he remarks in his journal: "God evidently had a hand in it, blessing my labors abundantly, and making it the most successful year of my ministry. Nearly three hundred (300) souls were hopefully converted to God." The following year he was re-appointed to the same charge, and his labors of love, as it regards the spiritual and temporal well being of the church in Morristown, will never be forgotten by the brethren in that locality.

At the conference of 1852, held in the West Church, Oswego, Brother Corbin received his appointment to Bucksbridge Circuit, and the following year was returned to the same charge. The latter was a year of some spiritual prosperity, but to him it was also a year of severe domestic affliction. His beloved companion, who had borne with him the trials of itinerancy, his adviser, his faithful bosom friend, the mother of his children, bade adieu to the toils of earth and ascended to her native heaven! As he plaintively remarks: "She was my all of earthly happiness," but cheerfully adds: "She died at her post saying to all that stood by her dying couch, 'Let me go! let me go!' Triumphantly she passed away!" Her funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Elisha Wheeler, from the text, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Only such as have been called to pass through the same fiery ordeal, can fully appreciate the feelings of that stricken heart, accustomed to look to a fond and loving companion for advice and words of cheer, now looking, but finding all a blank, a dismal vacancy, a dreary, barren waste.

Having seen the remains of his beloved companion deposited in the grave to await the summons from on high which will awaken the dust to vitality, and call forth the dead to the enjoyment of a resurrection life, Brother Corbin returned to his now desolate home, not to murmur at the providence of God, but to engage with unabated zeal in the work of the ministry. At the close of his second year at Burksbridge, he was appointed to Canton station. Although Canton is the shire town of St. Lawrence County, and contains an intelligent and wealthy population, and although it had been blessed with the labors of such men as John Seys, and Squire Chase, and James Erwin, and others, Methodism had never obtained a strong foothold in the village. This was partly owing to the pre-occupancy of the ground by our Presbyterian brethren, but mostly to the prevalence of Universalism in the village and surrounding country. A Methodist chapel had been erected in a central portion of the village for many years, but the interior arrangement was such as to render it uninviting to any except the members of the church. Hence, the congregation was small, and Methodism was poorly represented so far as church architecture or accommodation are concerned. Brother Corbin, like others before him, was too much of a philosopher not to know that the prosperity of the church in that place depended in some measure upon the facilities afforded for worship; and shortly after his appointment to Canton, he, with the aid of one or two large hearted brethren began to devise ways and means whereby a remedy might be applied and a new church edifice erected. A subscription was accordingly circulated, and the building was commenced, and although the important object was not fully completed during his pastorate, yet under the supervision of his successor, Rev. W. S. Titus, a beautiful brick edifice was dedicated to the worship of God, on the old site, the sermon being preached by Bishop Baker, which event gave a fresh impetus to the efforts of the society in behalf of the

spiritual well-being of sinners around them, and the result is that the Methodist Church in Canton is now among the most flourishing and prosperous within our bounds, having enjoyed since the period of which we speak several gracious revivals of religion, and secured not only the influence and patronage, but the conversion of many among the leading men of the place.

During Brother Corbin's second year in Canton, he became acquainted, providentially, with Mrs. Jane Peek, of Fayetteville, Onondaga County, and after a short time they resolved to travel life's journey together; accordingly on the 4th of December, 1855, they were united in matrimony by Rev. I. S. Bingham. Speaking of this event his excellent lady writes: "In the order of divine providence, he was lent me to bless my previously widowed being but for a short space of time. The 2d day of December he came to my dwelling a total stranger; two days later we were united in matrimony. On the 11th day of December in the year following, after a severe and protracted illness of nearly seven weeks, the Lord took him to his reward. Thus in one short year were bestowed sacred, blissful memories, and anguish of spirit indescribable and indelible as time."

While Brother Corbin was in Canton, he enjoyed a revival of religion each year of his pastorate. Under date of January 1st, 1855, he writes: "The Lord is with us on this station, and the truth that he has power to save has been fully sustained recently, in the hopeful conversion of upwards of a score of souls, in answer to the prayers of his people. Twenty-three have been admitted on probation into the church. The most of the membership on the station are evidently growing in grace. Assuredly the Lord has thus greatly prospered and comforted his people, and to him we will render praise and thanksgiving." Again, on the 7th of January, 1856, he informs his brethren, through the *Northern Christian Advocate*, of the continuance of the

work of grace on his charge: "The Lord has greatly favored us on this station this year with showers of rich grace in saving souls, and the work is yet going on. Upwards of thirty have united with us on probation, and there are many who have not yet given in their names to the church, that have given Christ their hearts."

At the close of his constitutional term, he received his appointment to the Theresa charge, in Jefferson County. During the first week of July, he entered fully upon his labors. The society in that place had just erected a comfortable parsonage, which was as yet in a partially unfinished state—the ground on which it stood was very rough and uneven—but Brother Corbin, desirous of seeing things done up right, put side and shoulder to the wheel, and not only superintended the grading and other improvements, but labored with his own hands, day after day, for the completion of the work. To him labor was not degrading, neither did he suppose that a refusal to assist in manual labor, where it could be profitably rendered, would add aught to his ministerial dignity or well-earned reputation as a successful Methodist preacher. But while exerting himself thus, he by no means neglected the primary and more important duties of a Christian pastor, nor did he allow the secular affairs of his charge to interfere with or retard his own growth in grace. He labored very efficiently in the pulpit, and gave universal satisfaction to the large congregations that sat under his ministry. On the first of September, he attended the Wassertown district camp meeting, and preached with his usual fervor and zeal. He seems greatly to have enjoyed this meeting, and soon after its close, he wrote the following:

"The camp meeting commencing September 1st, on this district, has resulted in honor and triumph to the Lamb of God. The weather was fine and the meeting was numerously attended. About sixty tents were erected on the ground—the most of them at an early hour on the first day of the meeting; and the brethren, with becoming zeal and interest, entered at once upon their work. Although the congrega-

tion was unusually large, order was preserved, and great interest and attention prevailed throughout the assembly. The preaching was pointed and well directed. A bow of the divine presence overshadowed the encampment—that Godly awe that dares not move prevailed the mass of mind that was assembled. Such eloquence and power in prayer I scarcely ever witnessed—clouds dispersed, shadows fled, the Invisible appeared in sight, and God was seen by mortal eye. Some were seeking for full redemption in Christ, others for the blessing of pardon. It is thought that fifty or more seekers found favor with God, and perhaps a larger number, full salvation. The church evidently had more religion when the meeting closed than it had at its commencement.

“Our brothers and sisters have pitched ‘their tents one week’s march nearer home.’ Our circuits and stations on the district were generally represented with tents on the ground. It is confidently believed that much more fruit, as the result of the meeting, is yet to be realized; throughout the district the revival spirit is generally felt. Our beloved superintendent (Rev. F. H. Stanton,) acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of all the preachers present. May he live long to bless the church and the world!

“The citizens of this vicinity are entitled to much credit for the high sense of propriety and good order that they exhibit on such occasions, and also for the pains they took to preserve good order at the meeting. The only exception that we record is that a few reckless and abandoned individuals disturbed our peace by peddling and huckstering in the vicinity of the meeting. What a shame that every religious gathering must be cursed with this three-penny, miserly vagrancy! But the scorn of public opinion is out on these villains, and they will be routed.”

Although laboring with great ardor in the cause of Christ at this time, his health was greatly impaired, and it was frequently difficult for him to go through with the services of the Sabbath. The last sermon he preached was on the words: “The path of the just is as the shining light,” etc. He made another attempt to preach ere the pall of death was spread over him, but was obliged to desist and return to his home. He went directly to bed, and remarked that

he had preached his last sermon. He was attacked with typhoid fever, and for seven long weeks he suffered greatly from pain, notwithstanding the most assiduous attention paid to his every want by his affectionate companion and sympathizing friends. Death at length released him from his toil and sufferings on the 11th day of December, 1856, as before stated.

Prior to his confinement to his bed, one of his brethren, who attended his ministry—William Dresser—remarks: “Although his health was poor, and the seeds of disease and death were sown in his mortal frame, yet his mind was clear as an angel’s, his hopes were high as heaven, his trust was surely in God, and his sermons and exhortations were clear and pointed and had the designed effect upon his hearer, and the church had high hopes of having much power during the conference year.” As might be expected, from the nature of his disease, his mind was frequently wandering and sometimes apparently distressed, but in his lucid moments every cloud was gone, and his sky was bright and clear. He expressed the wish that he might live to labor in the vineyard of the Lord, but added: “The will of the Lord be done!”

During the last two weeks of his illness, his soul was full of triumph, and often, in the watches of the night, his family were awakened by his shouts of praise. He was visited, a few hours before his final departure, by his brethren, Rev. C. L. Dunning and Rev. M. R. Pierce, and while they sung and prayed with him, he shouted repeatedly with a loud voice, the praise of God. Soon after, with an ejaculation of “glory” on his dying lips, he triumphantly crossed the narrow stream of death; while friends and kindred grasped his hands, and would gladly have retained the spirit a little longer, his Lord had need of him in a higher sphere, and closing his eyes on earth, he opened them in heaven! His remains were subsequently interred in the family burying ground in Depauville, his former place of residence.

The character of our deceased brother may be inferred

from the short and imperfect narrative thus given of his life and labors. In person, he was tall and somewhat slimly built, with dark hair and a piercing black eye. He was a cheerful, sociable companion, kind and amiable in his domestic relations, active and laborious in his ministerial work, a true friend of the church of his choice, a lover of her doctrines and institutions, and in a single word, a benefactor of mankind. Brother Corbin laid no claim to extensive mental culture. His mind, though active and vigorous, and cast in no common mould, had not received the polish of a finished literary training, a want that he both felt and deplored ; still, such was his acceptability and success as a preacher, that he filled some important stations, and won for himself, not only the esteem, but the love and affection of his hearers, many of whom will remember with pleasure and others with gratitude, the acquaintance formed with him on earth, and which we trust will be renewed in heaven !

CHAPTER IX.

WILLIAM H. BLANCHARD.

WILLIAM H. BLANCHARD was born in the town of Schuyler, Herkimer County, New York, in the year 1825. At the age of eighteen he was convicted of sin, sought the pearl of great price, and became the subject of converting grace. He probably would have become a follower of Jesus Christ at an earlier age, had it not been that being a close observer of the conduct of men in general, and of professors of religion in particular, and witnessing for himself in many of the latter, habitual derelictions from the path of uprightness, and a course of conduct altogether incompatible with

the claims of Christianity, he hesitated about making an effort to secure personal salvation, reasoning himself into the belief that he was already as good as were many others who made greater pretensions to piety.

This course of reasoning was wrong, for although the premise laid down might have been correct, the conclusion that he drew from it, that he need not seek the Lord, was certainly a fallacy, a fact that he subsequently proved for himself, and frequently enforced upon the attention of others. And yet by a similar course of reasoning do multitudes procrastinate the duties of repentance, faith and good works: "If others are sound, I will be; and if such an one exhibits the spirit and temper of Christianity, I am just as good a Christian as he is." Now, while such excuses will scarcely avail at the bar of God, and those that make them will listen to the awful declaration: "Ye knew *your* duty, but ye did it not!" Oh! what a load of remorse will weigh down those who, through carelessness or inconsistency of conduct as professors of religion, have placed a stumbling block in the way of others. How many, many souls in the day of judgment will rise up and condemn the professors of this generation, because of the evil example set before the unconverted, and the unhallowed influence flowing from such an example!

And yet young Blanchard could not stifle forever the call of the spirit and the voice of conscience by looking at the imperfections of others, but he resolved that when converted he would avoid their foibles, a resolution good in itself and which we believe he endeavored faithfully to carry out.

When and where he received license to preach we have no knowledge. After his conversion, he became a student in the Oneida Conference Seminary, at Cazenovia, and in the year 1850, he joined the Black River Conference as a probationer, having been recommended by the quarterly conference of Frankfort Circuit, April 27th of the same year; the "recommend" being signed by Benj. I. Diefen-

dorf, president, and Peter Dedrick, secretary. His first appointment by the bishop was Natural Bridge Circuit, in connection with Thomas D. Sleeper as preacher in charge. This latter gentleman, after having traveled a few years in conference with more or less success, withdrew from the church and joined the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Whether he has succeeded better as a minister with his surplice and bands we know not. If at the time of his traveling with Brother Blanchard, he had inclinations toward *the Church* he must have met with small encouragement from his colleague in that direction.

We know not what success Brother Blanchard had on his first field of labor, but at the next conference he passed a very creditable examination in the different branches of conference study, being pronounced by the committee "good," or "very good," on nearly all.

His next appointment (1851) was Philadelphia Circuit, where he remained one year as preacher in charge. At the close of his second year he attended conference in Ogdensburg, was received into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Morris. He was appointed this year to Parishville Circuit, in the Potsdam District, Rev. George C. Woodruff being presiding elder. Brother Blanchard had some success on this charge, and was returned to it the second year. During both years on Parishville Circuit, although his labors were arduous, he cheerfully performed them, and gave very general satisfaction as a preacher of the gospel. At the following conference held in Camden, May 31st, 1854, he was ordained elder, by Bishop Morris, having passed through his four years' course of study, creditably to himself, and satisfactorily to the committee and the conference. At this conference he was appointed to Bangor Circuit, on the same district, the author being presiding elder. Here our first intimate acquaintance with Brother Blanchard commenced, and we found him what we had previously heard him to be, a laborious, faithful Methodist

minister. Such was his success that the people generally desired his return another year, and he was accordingly returned.

During his second year at Bangor, his health became seriously affected. Symptoms of pulmonary consumption manifested themselves, and in expressing his feelings to his presiding elder, in relation to the future, he stated that if he had means with which to support himself and family, he would at the next conference ask for a superannuated relation, but as he had no means of support, he supposed he must labor and suffer in the field until his Master called for him. Here was a case appealing to the sympathy, not only of presiding elder, but of the preachers and members who knew him. But what could be done? The small pittance doled out at the close of a superannuate's year, he well knew would be insufficient to meet the wants of his family, and he came to the conclusion that he must labor if he died in the attempt. Supposing that the southern part of the conference might be more favorable to his health than the extreme northern part, he desired his presiding elder to secure for him an appointment in the former, which at the next conference was done, and he was stationed at Florence, in Oneida County.

He went to his new field of labor with many doubts as to his being able, for any great length of time, to endure the toil and labor that would be expected of him. He, however, entered upon it with all the strength he had, and continued during the summer and fall to fill the most of his appointments, until the middle of December, when he preached his last sermon from 1 Peter, iv, 7: "The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer." Subsequently, his strength rapidly gave way, and he continued sinking until the 23d day of January, 1857, when death relieved him from his physical pains and sufferings. His funeral was attended on the 25th of January, the sermon being preached by Rev. D. M. Rogers, at Florence,

from Heb. xiii, 14: "For we have here no continuing city; but we seek one to come." By the request of his friends, his remains were conveyed for interment to Schuyler, his native town, where they peacefully rest, awaiting the summons that shall call them to a nobler mansion above.

As in nearly all cases of pulmonary consumption, our brother flattered himself that he would ultimately recover his health; hence, the text from which he preached his last sermon, though prophetic of his own approaching dissolution, was not used by him with any such reference, but as a general truth that he wished to impress on the minds of his hearers, as well as his own. But though not expecting death so soon, when it did come, it found him not unprepared to meet it, but with calmness and serenity he yielded up his spirit, with a blessed anticipation of entering the upper sanctuary, and of being forever with the Lord. Thus died William H. Blanchard, in the 33d year of his age and eighth of his ministry. In this connection, it may be proper to remark that the good people of Florence were remarkably kind to our sick and dying brother, as also to his helpless family, consisting of a wife and two small children. During his gradual decline and sickness, every act of kindness and generosity was manifested by them to cheer the last days and hours of the dying itinerant. The Lord will reward them, for "he that giveth to one of my disciples a cup of cold water shall in no wise lose his reward."

We have thus sketched the life and labors of our departed brother, as far and as fully as our limited means of information allow. It remains for us to speak of him in his private and public character.

Brother Blanchard was of medium size—light hair and fair complexion, with blue eyes. He was quick and active in his movements, and although at first sight he would not prepossess any one in his favor, either as it regarded talent or refinement, yet, as acquaintance ripened, the observer would discover that there was no want of either—that he

had talent of a superior order, and that beneath the exterior of the man was a hidden vein of refined sensibility, which, when opportunity occurred for its development, shone none the less brightly for having been partially kept from view.

As a scholar, our departed brother was above mediocrity. What his earlier advantages had been, or how long he remained a student at Cazenovia, we are not able to say; but we know from the reports of the examining committees, during his four years' conference course of study, that he must have applied himself diligently to reading, and we know, also, from the few sermons we were permitted to hear him preach, that his literary acquirements were of an order not to be despised.

Preachers have their peculiarities, and the most prominent one exhibited by Brother Blanchard was his frank and open denunciation of evil, and of that which had the *appearance* of evil, of sin, and what he thought to be sin, especially in church members. Hence, in his sermons, exhortations and in leading classes, he did not shun to speak his mind freely on all points involving moral responsibility, even though by doing so, he was so far obliged to particularize, as to identify the individual, and to say, as Nathan did to David: "Thou art the man." Such frankness and openness of expression frequently created him enemies, where otherwise firm friends might have been secured. Neither did he seem to care whether men were pleased or displeased, because of his rebukes and his open denunciation of sin. He acted on the principle laid down by the poet:

"Shall I, to soothe the unholy throng,
Softened thy truth or smoothed my tongue,
To gain earth's gilded toys,—or flee
The cross endured, my Lord, by thee?

"What then is he whose scorn I dread?
Whose wrath or hate makes me afraid?
A man! an heir of death! a slave
To sin! a bubble on the wave."

True, he was sometimes liable to err in regard to what constitutes moral wrong doing, as he seemed to adopt the principle as correct, that what would be wrong in him as a Christian must be equally wrong in every supposable case. He thus sometimes made his own views the standard of right and wrong, while he honestly believed that such views were founded on the precepts of the New Testament. Others, however, might differ from him in regard to the moral quality of certain acts, esteeming certain things to be not only allowable but commendable, which he esteemed reprehensible and wicked—as for instance: attending a state or county agricultural fair he believed to be wicked and opposed to the spirit of the gospel. Hence, he would not attend such a gathering himself, but would fearlessly and openly rebuke those who did, whether minister or layman. Now, where a question of morals like the above is unsettled, even though he might be correct in his views, the application of any rule coming in contact with the pre-conceived opinions and honest judgment of others, would be sure to give offense, and the more so, in proportion as the party adjudged of wrongdoing was sincere in his own convictions of duty. We remember another case in point: At a quarterly meeting on Brother Blanchard's charge, the presiding elder, in consequence of the badness of the roads, was detained from the place of meeting a few minutes after the appointed hour. In such cases, Brother B. showed no mercy; being a punctual man himself, he concluded all others should be equally so. He accordingly took occasion, while announcing the appointments for the Sabbath, to exhort the people against tardiness, and not to follow the example of the elder in loitering by the way! The "elder," who was aware of Brother B.'s peculiarity, took the matter pleasantly, but a portion of the congregation, who did not know him as well, thought the pastor was to be blamed.

But if Brother Blanchard erred in going to one extreme, and thereby gained enemies, is there not great danger of go-

ing as far in the opposite direction for the sake of securing friends? In the former case, our brother endeavored faithfully to carry out the scriptural injunction: "Thou shalt not suffer sin upon thy neighbor, but shalt in any case rebuke him." In the latter, while the friendship of the world may be retained or secured, it will be at the expense of the friendship of God. Fortunate is he that avoids undue severity and harshness on the one hand, and unbecoming looseness and laxity on the other.

As a preacher Brother Blanchard was more than ordinary. Though frank, open, and somewhat inclined to the denunciatory style, there was a vigor and freshness of thought, and an originality of expression running through his discourses, which, if not captivating, was at least interesting and instructive. Not only was the matter of his sermons good and generally sound, but his manner of delivering was forcible and by no means repulsive, as some perhaps might infer from what we have above said. If he gathered no flowers wherewith to deck his sermons, he brought good sound common sense to his aid, and backed up as he generally was by a "Thus saith the Lord!" he was not only a good, but a successful preacher. One important lesson he had learned from observation, viz: He that sets himself up as a public teacher must prove to his hearers that he is himself taught, that he is not only versed in the subjects he desires to present to their consideration, but that he can do it without a violation of any rule of language as laid down in the books, and endorsed by every refined mind and tolerably well-educated person. Hence Brother Blanchard while in style somewhat severe and harsh, did not add to that harshness by a total disregard of the rules of grammar as taught by Lindley Murray and others. And the author takes this opportunity of saying to his younger brethren in the ministry, and to all who are intending to enter the ministry, whatever other branches of study you neglect as preparatory to the same, do not neglect your grammar. Hearers in

general will pardon occasional errors in rhetoric and frequent departures from the higher rules of composition and oratory ; but they demand—they have a right to demand—that the man who instructs their children from the pulpit shall not overthrow all the efforts of the teacher in the common school, by teaching them Sabbath, after Sabbath, in the most forcible manner possible, how they may disregard the plainest principles of common English and common sense, and yet be well educated persons.

As a husband and a father, the sorrowing widow and orphan children of Brother Blanchard can appreciate his worth better than we can describe it. In both of these relations he was what might be expected of the truly Christian man, a devoted husband and an affectionate parent. As a neighbor he was obliging, as a man he was prompt in the fulfillment of all his engagements, as a member of the conference, though not extensively known, he was respected and beloved. His strong points as a minister far outbalanced his weak ones. He was steadily and devotedly pious, a man of much prayer and a man of one work. Peace to his memory !

CHAPTER X.

REV. CHARLES W. LEET.*

THE subject of this sketch was born in the town of Guilford, county of New Haven, state of Connecticut, in the the month of October, 1799. In the year 1808, his father removed to the town of Verona, county of Oneida, New

* Miss Adeline Leet, of Verona, daughter of Rev. C. W. Leet, will please accept our thanks for information in regard to her father's early life, and the eventful scenes attending his decease.

York, of which place he became a permanent resident. Charles remained at home with his parents during his childhood and youth, his early life being marked by few peculiar incidents,—indeed by none save such as are common to all boys of his age. He was favored in childhood and youth with the advantages of a common school education, and as he grew older, he became a student in Fairfield Seminary, where he appears to have improved his facilities for acquiring knowledge to the best possible advantage, and where he no doubt laid the foundation for a successful career of usefulness in subsequent life.

While a young man, his lively social disposition and his desire to contribute to the pleasure and amusement of his associates won him many friends, especially among the children, who were ever happy in his presence, and who, as soon as they became acquainted with him, became greatly attached to him. This faculty of pleasing children he retained through life, and not only added to the happiness of hundreds of little ones, who looked up to him with the greatest confidence and tender regard, but proved a source of unsullied joy to himself when in the maturity and vigor of manhood, and when descending the declivity of life's rugged hill.

Of his early religious training he gives the following brief account: "From my father I never received any religious instruction, he not being a professor of religion; yet he was more careful of the morals of his children than are many professors, and exercised a strict and in some instances a severe discipline over them. My mother united with the Presbyterian Church, in Guilford, of which the Rev. Israel Brainard was pastor, when I was about five years of age, at which time, with the rest of the children, I was baptized. I distinctly recollect the transaction and the solemn impression made upon my mind thereby."

In the year 1822, being then twenty-three years of age, he was united in holy matrimony to Miss Adeline S. Loomis,

of Verona, with whom he lived in great harmony, and pursued his business as a chair maker for a number of years in Verona. For eight years after his marriage, although his wife was a professor of religion, he remained a stranger to the saving grace of God. In the latter part of the year 1830, occurred his conversion. His wife being in a state of feeble health, and failing gradually in physical strength, begat in him serious thoughts as it regarded his own personal fitness for death. This seriousness deepened into sorrowful conviction for sin, and as the malady of which his dear companion was the subject, had a tendency to depress her spirits, and to make her doubt her acceptance with God, and to dim her prospects in regard to the future, he very properly reasoned with himself, that if one so pure and exemplary as she was had cause to doubt her fitness for glory, how much greater must be his danger of coming short of heaven, whose life was so far from being holy and unblamable? Thus the spirit of God strove with him from time to time, and thus the godly example of his pious wife was a constant rebuke to him. At length he wisely resolved to cease fighting against God, and to seek salvation through the merits of the crucified. One day, while a pious Presbyterian brother was praying with his wife, and commending her to the God of all grace, the subject of this Memoir ventured to join his supplications with those of his wife and her friendly visitor, and soon he felt his burden gone and his soul at peace. A great change had been produced in his feelings, but he did not immediately realize it as a work of saving grace in the heart. That passage of scripture at length came into his mind, where our Saviour says: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which is indeed the least of all seeds, but when it is grown up it is the greatest among herbs." In reflecting upon this beautiful illustration of the progress of grace in the heart of man, he soon gained the evidence that he was accepted of God through the merits of Jesus Christ.

Soon after his conversion, he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church as an humble probationer, and in March following, (1831,) such was the confidence of his pastor—Rev. James Kelsey—and that of his brethren, in his “gifts, grace and usefulness,” that they gave him license to exhort, which license was duly renewed at the quarterly meeting in the following July—Rev. George Gary being the presiding elder. He diligently improved his license to exhort, holding meetings in different localities, and warning sinners to flee the wrath to come. His labors as an exhorter were duly appreciated by his brethren, and in September, 1832, he received from Brother Gary, by vote of the quarterly conference, a license to preach the gospel, which was duly renewed in June of the following year.

Meanwhile, his beloved wife, who, under God, was the means of his conversion, departed this life, and exchanged her earthly tabernacle for “a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.” Her death, instead of diminishing his confidence in God as a kind father, only served to increase his zeal and to quicken his pace in the divine life. He resolved now, more than ever, to dedicate himself entirely to the service of God, and to give himself wholly to the work of the ministry. During a portion of the year, after having received license to preach, he labored on Westmoreland Circuit—a circuit, by the way, which has become famous in the annals of Methodism in Central New York, and to which frequent reference is made in this and the preceding volume. At the close of the conference year—1832–3—Brother Leet, having fully made up his mind to obey the call of God, and to become the servant of the church, obtained a recommendation from the quarterly conference, and in September, 1833, he became a probationer in the Oneida Annual Conference, and received an appointment to Steuben Circuit, with Rev. J. Pomeroy as his senior colleague.

Believing that it is not good for man to be alone, and that

his usefulness would be impaired by remaining in a state of widowhood, he, soon after conference, united himself in marriage with Miss Sophronia Stone, of Vernon, who not only become an affectionate companion, but a tender mother to his orphaned children, and who, during the entire course of his itinerant life, has shared with him the ups and downs, the lights and shades, the joys and sorrows, incident to the calling of a traveling Methodist preacher. Not that shadows exceed the lights in the pilgrim's way, or that the sorrows over-balance the joys—far otherwise. In the life of every Methodist minister, and of every Methodist minister's wife, there are some thorns, but there are many flowers, fragrant and beautiful; there are some sacrifices to be made, but there are some, too, which are avoided by the very fact of becoming identified with the itinerancy. We never yet could sympathize with the sentiment sometimes advanced by younger brethren in the ministry, that in becoming an itinerant, a mighty sacrifice has been made, and great pecuniary losses have resulted as the effect of such a choice. In some rare instances this may be true. We have in our mind while we write, the case of a young man, (not the author,) whose parents were wealthy, members of a popular church, influential and proud, who, on learning that their son had joined the despised Methodists, disowned and disinherited him, and even forbade him ever to enter the parental mansion unless he would forsake the people of his choice; but who, deaf to all threats, and regardless of the frowns of those he loved best on earth, has been for fifty years and over an able minister in the Methodist church. In this case, there was an *apparent* sacrifice made—a sacrifice of ease, of wealth, of parental friendship and local attachments, but no real sacrifice of honor, or influence, or the blessings of a quiet home or happiness—not at all; what the young man lost in one direction, he gained in another, and no doubt much more abundantly. We never heard this young man speak of his sacrifices, as though the church and world and Jesus Christ

were placed under everlasting obligations to him for what he had done and suffered, but we have heard young men tell how very much they had sacrificed for the sake of the gospel, who, were the facts all known to and appreciated by themselves, had more reason to thank God and his church for raising them from a state of obscurity, and perhaps even poverty, and giving them influence and standing in community, and if not a large share of wealth, at least a competency, certainly much more than many others who, having been born and reared in the same humble sphere with themselves, have been able to secure after a life of unremitting hardship and toil.

To return from this digression, which we take the liberty of saying was not suggested by any remark ever made by him whose Memoir we now write, or by his respected surviving friends, but solely from the reflections made on the lights and shadows of the itinerancy, we proceed to state that Brother Leet, having now fully entered upon the work of a traveling preacher, directed all his energies, mental and physical, toward one great object—the salvation of souls. He labored successfully on Steuben Circuit, and even to this day his praise is in all the churches of that region. In 1834, he was continued on trial, and appointed to Antwerp Circuit, which was then included in Potsdam District, Rev. John Dempster being the presiding elder. This was a feeble circuit, having but eighty-two members and probationers; and such as it was, so has it to some extent remained, till within a few years past, not because the preachers laboring there have been unfaithful, or the few members been derelict, but on account of the former wide-spread, deep-rooted influence of Universalism and other antagonistic principles to Methodism, the latter never has been able, till lately, to secure that foothold that she has in most all other portions of the conference. Brother Leet, however, labored efficiently, had some revival influence, and made returns of an increase of twelve (12) to the following con-

ference, which, considering all the circumstances, was a larger increase than might have been anticipated.*

At the conference of 1835, Brother Leet was received into full connection and ordained deacon. He was appointed to the charge of Gouverneur Circuit, with John Wallace as junior preacher. This, at that period, was a large and important circuit. He and his colleague labored efficiently, had revivals in different portions of the charge, and were able to report at the next session of the conference a net increase of thirty. In 1836, at the Black River Conference just organized, he was appointed to the newly formed Canton station. Here he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of all his hearers for about nine months, when he was removed by the presiding elder, Rev. John Loveys, to the charge of Potsdam station, left vacant by the appointment of Rev. Jesse T. Peck as principal of Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary, which had recently been secured to the Methodist Church by the joint action of the trustees and the preachers on Potsdam District. In securing the above transfer, Brother Leet had taken a deep interest, and it is not too much to say, after the lapse of a quarter of a century and over since the institution became denominationalized, that the preachers then on the district acted with far-seeing wisdom and forethought in providing for the literary wants of the people in Northwestern New York. True, there were already several flourishing academical institutions in the

*Since the above was penned, a great change has come over the prospects of the Antwerp charge. Some years since, the Wesleyan Seminary at Gouverneur was abandoned by the Black River Conference, and the "Liberal Institute" at Antwerp, having been offered and accepted by the Conference, a new era has dawned upon that place, where the Conference now owns splendid academic buildings, with a large and commodious church edifice, and better than all, a flourishing society of fervent Christians, and from year to year an able evangelical ministry. The literary institute is now known as "Ives Seminary," and is proving a blessing to the beautiful village where it is located, and to all the surrounding region.

district. Ogdensburg, Potsdam, Canton, Malone and Fort Covington, each had their academy, but all of these combined did not and could not supply the wants of the Methodist public. A denominational school was felt to be a *desideratum*, and the seminary at Gouverneur being offered without money or price, simply on the condition of being sustained by the Methodist community was a gift—a godsend—which could not be despised or rejected. The history of the institution thus far, notwithstanding its reverses by fire and otherwise, proves the wisdom of the step taken by the preachers in 1837. From this seminary has been sent out into the ministry and other public walks of usefulness, hundreds of young men and women, who have done honor to the institution which educated them, while the seminary itself has been honored and blessed by the able men who from time to time have had the supervision of the school, or have filled the professor's chair. Such men as Peck, Wentworth, Knox, Banister, Armstrong, Bruce, and others, will not soon be forgotten by the thousands who have been fitted through their instructions for the stern duties of life.

Brother Leet, having filled out the year at Potsdam, was at the next session of the conference, in 1837, held at that place, re-appointed to the same charge. He was also ordained elder, by Bishop Hedding. He gave general satisfaction to the people during the entire year, and would no doubt have been re-appointed by the bishop for another year, but for the disciplinary limitation. The following year, 1838, he was stationed at Fulton, then and now one of the most important stations in the conference. Here he remained two years, when he was appointed to Weedsport, another important station, where he also remained two years. In both of those places he proved himself to be a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, and left a hallowed impression on the minds of his hearers, that time will not obliterate. In 1842, he was appointed to Little Falls station, where he preached acceptably for two years,

and where the hallowed influence of his name and influence is still felt among the people.

In 1844, in consequence of ill health he was under the necessity of taking a superannuated relation, hoping that a respite from labor would re-invigorate his system; but for five years in succession he was obliged to submit to the burdens of superannuation, with but little abatement of the severity of the disease under which he was constantly suffering. During this period of suspension from pastoral labor, he preached as often as his strength would permit and providence opened the way.

In 1847, although superannuated, such was the confidence reposed in his piety and judgment by the conference, that he was elected one of the delegates to the general conference of 1848, which met at Pittsburgh, Penn. His colleagues on the delegation were Gary, Mattison, Stone and Dempster, and he was appointed one of the committee on the state of the church. Being in poor health, he was unable to take a very prominent part in the proceedings of that grave and venerable body of Christ's ministers, but his acts and votes on all questions were such as to secure the approbation of his constituents.

In 1848, his health being somewhat improved, he accepted the agency of the Falley Seminary, in Fulton, Oswego County, and was somewhat successful in securing funds for and otherwise promoting the interests of that popular institution. In 1849, his health was so much improved that he ventured to join the effective ranks again, and was stationed in Belleville, Jefferson County. Here he labored as best he could, with enfeebled health and impaired strength, for one year, at the close of which he thought he must again forsake the regular work, but anxious if possible to remain upon the walls of Zion, he ventured to retain his effective relation and was appointed to the village of Adams. But during the greater portion of the year he found himself unable to supply the pulpit, and became convinced long

before the year had closed, that his strength was not adequate to the duties of the pastorate. Accordingly, in 1851, he again reluctantly received a superannuated relation, which he retained until the close of life.

He retired to his home in Vernon, where he spent his time as best he could in partially supplying the wants of his family, and occasionally preaching the gospel. After a time, his health being somewhat improved, he received an invitation from the society at Lairdsville to preach to them as his strength would allow. As this had been one of his favorite preaching places before joining conference, and as he was greatly attached to the people, he cheerfully accepted the invitation, and consented to preach to them one sermon each Sabbath. At this place he continued to preach as above stated, about two years and a half, and until four weeks before his death. His shattered constitution was evidently giving way before the march of disease, and the good man's work on earth was nearly at an end. The disease with which he had been afflicted for so many years was the asthma, in its worst form. For the last eight years of his life he rarely went to bed, being under the necessity of seeking repose sitting in his chair, in which position his nights were usually spent, and in which he finally died.

His last extreme illness was brief, being confined to the house only two weeks. His last week on earth was one of great physical suffering and distress, so much so, that death was earnestly desired by him as the deliverer from his pain, and as the messenger of peace; and when the summons came, he was fully prepared to meet it, trusting, with a Christian's trust and a Christian's hope, in the merits of Jesus Christ. Rev. Mr. Pearne, who wrote a short obituary soon after the death of Brother Leet, says: "His religious trust was scriptural and sufficient. A long while dying, his joys triumphed over all his pain. He was very happy! His death was not only peaceful but triumphant—a beautiful illustration of the power and glory of the grand foundation

of all genuine Christian experience—justification through faith in the blood that pardons and saves !” The burden of his parting messages to absent members of his family was : “ Have faith in God ! ” His peace was evidently wholly derived from his reliance on the merits of Jesus Christ, there being no dependence placed upon any work or merit of his own ; and in conversing with Brother Pearne, in relation to his funeral sermon, he particularly desired that there should be no word of eulogy for him—nothing said of any success that had attended his labors in the ministry. He desired nothing save to glorify God in his death, and exalt his Saviour with his dying breath, and cry : “ Behold the Lamb ! ” Thus lived and thus died our beloved and venerated brother. His decease occurred at his home in Vernon, on Sabbath morning, December 13, 1857.

In speaking of the characters of certain men, the biographer is frequently deterred from stating all he knows or believes of what is derogatory and repulsive in his heroes. Hence, whatever is virtuous and of good report is made the subject of praise, while whatever savors of evil is carefully hidden from the public view, and the “ hero of the tale ” stands out something more than a man—a kind of demi-god, to be admired and worshipped by the readers, while, were all the facts in relation to public and private life fully and impartially related, there would be much to abhor and deprecate in the lives of those so highly extolled for their virtues and their graces. Thank God ! there is but little to tempt the biographer of a Methodist preacher in this direction. True, his heroes are not all gods, but men—“ men of like passions with other men,”—but a Methodist preacher, such as he should be, and such as he generally is, is a person who has “ escaped the pollution of the world,” and if not what may be denominated a *great* man, is at least a *good* man, one of whom the world is not worthy ; and as greatness, generally, is more an accidental than a positive quality, and goodness is in no case accidental nor natural to man, so its

acquirement is more meritorious, or, if the reader prefer, more praiseworthy, than the mere reputation of greatness. When, therefore, we ascribe to man the quality of goodness of heart, purity of motive, honesty of intention, benevolence of soul, meekness of spirit, with an humble trust in God, we ascribe to him more than can be acquired by accident, by education or by natural talents—what only can be received as a gift of God, through the operations of the Holy Spirit.

That Brother Leet was possessed of those latter qualities to a greater or less degree of perfection, we think all who were well acquainted with him will allow. As a preacher, while he was not what the popular voice would pronounce great or splendid, he was, nevertheless, far from being below the average standard. His sermons were characterized by good sense and sound theology—by variety, if not by originality. In his pulpit efforts he was zealous; in his style vigorous; his application close and heart-searching. He evidently labored for the good of souls, and tried in every possible way to win them to Christ; and his efforts in this direction were not in vain, as many will witness at the last day.

As a husband and father, he was all that could be desired, making his home pleasant, and its inmates happy. Though dead, he still lives in the affections of his bereaved widow and surviving children, who bless the memory of one so dear.

Brother Leet was an active member of the conference, usually taking a part in discussions on all important subjects. He generally was placed on important committees, and his views on controverted subjects deferred to by his brethren. But he rests calmly and peacefully in death, and there let us leave him, till we hail his sweet spirit in a brighter world!

CHAPTER XI.

REV. SILAS C. KINNEY.

BROTHER KINNEY was born in the town of Rodman, Jefferson County, state of New York, October 23d, 1813. His parents, Daniel and Rachael Kinney, were from Williamstown, Mass. They moved to Rodman in the year 1806, and were both of them Methodists of the olden stamp, zealous, faithful and laborious in the cause of God. With them, religion was an every day work, and its duties demanded and received daily attention, whether in the house or in the field. As might be expected, the moral and religious influence brought to bear upon the junior members of the family was of the most salutary and controlling character.

Silas was the youngest of seven children. His father being a farmer, and needing all the help he could obtain from his sons in the cultivation of the farm, Silas during his ministry labored on the farm during the summer seasons, and in winter attended the district school. Hence, until he reached the age of manhood, he had merely the advantages of a common school education, and was in no manner distinguished from the rest of his schoolmates for literary acquirements or fondness for study. On the farm, however, he was exceedingly industrious and energetic, doing with his might what his hands found to do. At the age of twenty-four he was married, May 1st, 1837, to Miss Zobeida Boynton, of Rodman. She was then a member of the Baptist Church, and an exemplary Christian lady. With her he commenced business for himself on a farm in Rodman, and was industrious and successful in its prosecution.

From childhood he had been thoughtful and serious on the subject of religion, and had more or less attended to

secret prayer, but until the time of his marriage, and indeed for some years after, had made no profession of religion. His beginning business on his own account, and the increased care in providing for the mouths of a growing family, seemed to engross his attention and render him less thoughtful about the interests of his soul. In the spring of 1840, however, he became deeply awakened, and was soundly converted to God. Rev. Alban M. Smith was at that time stationed in Rodman, and was holding a series of meetings in the old Rodman Church. One night, while the meeting was in progress, Mr. Kinney entered the church. The only indication that there was anything unusual on his mind was the fact that he had come two miles on horseback, through the deep mud, to attend a prayer-meeting. That evening when an opportunity was afforded of coming to the altar for prayer, several of his friends and associates availed themselves of the privilege. This produced a wonderful effect upon his mind, and as he afterward told his brother, he reasoned thus: "I have always been convinced of the reality and necessity of experimental religion. I have often been almost persuaded to be a Christian, but hitherto have vacillated and put it off till a more convenient season. Here are my old companions in sin, starting in the way to heaven. When shall I have a more favorable time? In God's strength I'll now seek the salvation of my soul—I'll go now to the altar!" and as he arose to make known his purpose, and to request the prayers of the pious, the Lord met him in a wonderful manner. The change was as unexpected to him as to others. For the first few days afterward, the language of his heart and tongue was "How good the Lord is!"

Although Brother Kinney began the life of a Christian under strong mental excitement, and his conversion was sudden, and somewhat out of the usual way in which the repenting soul finds pardon and the weary spirit finds rest, there can be no doubt of his having been converted then and

there. From that period onward, he never faltered in his course; his face was continually turned toward "Zion, the city of the Great King." Powerful temptations he had, constitutionally low spirited, at times very much depressed, yet he never cast away his confidence in God, nor did he ever lose the witness he received on the night of his conversion.

He returned from the house of God that night a new man. He told his anxious, and now joyful wife, what God had done for his soul, and immediately erected an altar of worship in his family, and from that hour till the close of life, his house was a house of prayer. Shortly after his conversion, he with his wife joined the Methodist Church, in Rodman, with which they remained identified until he was called to the work of the ministry. At what particular period subsequent to his conversion, he felt it his duty to enter the ministry, we know not. It was not long, however, before he manifested an ardent desire for the prosperity of the cause of God, and was exercised with an earnest travail of soul for his unconverted neighbors and friends. The Rev. Enoch Barnes succeeded Brother Smith on Rodman charge, and during the stay of the latter, Brother Kinney received his first license to exhort. Naturally diffident and distrustful of himself, he sought by much prayer and supplication, and with many tears, to know the will of God concerning him. Sometimes he was greatly encouraged while attempting to call sinners to repentance, and thought he saw the path of duty plain before him; and at other times his soul was cast down within him, and he was in great doubt as to what God required him to do. But in the midst of all his doubts and fears he maintained his Christian integrity, was punctual in the use of all the means of grace, and exercised his gifts publicly, as an exhorter, as duty indicated and providence opened the way.

Shortly after receiving license to exhort, he removed to the town of Dexter, in the same county, where he remained until 1843, when he returned to Rodman. At what

particular time and under whose administration he received license as a local preacher, we have not been informed. In the year 1848, he was received on trial in the Black River Conference, having been recommended by the quarterly conference of Rodman station, and was appointed to Copenhagen charge with Rev. Hiram Shepard as senior preacher, and George C. Woodruff, presiding elder. The following year, he was sent to Russell mission, in the Watertown District, Rev. G. Baker, presiding elder. In 1850, he was continued on trial, and returned to Russell mission. In 1851, having passed a satisfactory examination in the conference course of study, he was admitted into full connection with the conference, elected and ordained deacon by Bishop Janes, at Oswego, and sent to New London, in the Rome District, under the presiding eldership of Rev. Isaac L. Hunt. In 1852, he was sent to the Ohio mission in the same district, and in 1853 was ordained elder by Bishop Simpson, at Watertown, and was returned to the field of labor occupied by him the previous year. In 1854, he was appointed to the Stratford mission, in the Rome District, and the following year to Amboy Circuit, in the Camden District, with Rev. George Sawyer as his presiding elder.

While at Amboy, our brother was called to pass through the furnace of affliction. On the 24th of January, 1856, he buried an infant daughter, and on the 20th of the following month, his devoted and pious wife died of consumption, leaving him lonely and stricken with grief, with the care of three daughters, Mary, Adelaide and Celestia. Adelaide, the second daughter, died two years subsequently to the death of her mother. The following is her obituary, as published at the time :

“Adelaide E. Kinney, second daughter of Rev. Silas Kinney, of Black River Conference, departed this life in hope of a blissful immortality, March 28th, 1858, at the residence of her father, in Rodman, Jefferson County, New York, in the 17th year of her age.

“She was converted at the age of thirteen, and soon after

joined the M. E. Church, and shared with her parents in the joys and sorrows of an itinerant life, until her mother left for an eternal home in heaven, when her father's health became prostrated by disease, and he returned to Rodman, his former place of residence, where they were kindly welcomed. Sister A. was a consistent Christian, possessed of an amiable disposition and a clear and fruitful mind, influenced by the grace of God. She was strong in her attachment to and faithful in the use of all the means of grace. She was well calculated to secure the affections of all. But disease came in the form of quick consumption. Her friends saw she rapidly declined, and told her she must die. Then came the struggle, but it was short, and the victory secured through the blood of the Lamb. She was very anxious to see her friends, but said to her parents, "you can tell them I have gone to heaven," and to her sister Mary, "I shall be with mother before morning." So soon the flower bloomed to fade on earthly soil, but on that which is heavenly shall bloom forever. May grace sustain the surviving relatives, and prepare them to meet where death shall separate, no, never.

H. TILDEN.*

Rodman, March 13, 1858."

In 1856, Brother Kinney was sent to Oswego and Granby Circuit. He had for his junior colleague, Rev. David B. White, since become Major White, of the volunteer army of the United States. In the fall of 1836, while laboring on this charge and residing at Oswego Centre, his health failed to such an extent that he was obliged to leave his field of labor. Having again married, by choosing as his companion Mrs. Mary E. Jackson, the widow of a deceased Methodist minister, he with his family removed to Geneva, N. Y., and placed himself under the care and treatment of a skilful physician. His lungs were greatly affected, and his system generally prostrated by disease, but with the judicious treatment he received, his health during the winter improved to

* There is evidently an error in the dates in the above obituary. The article is dated March 13th, some fifteen days before the day mentioned as the one on which she died, March 28th. Her uncle informs us she died February 25th, 1858.

such an extent, that in the following spring he returned to Rodman, where he purchased a small farm, intending to support himself and family by the labor of his hands, as his lungs were too much diseased to allow him to preach constantly. Here his health might have continued to improve had he labored moderately as his strength would allow, but being unable to employ help, he over-tasked his physical powers, and during the summer, it is said, he performed as much labor as a perfectly healthy man ought to have done.

In 1857, he took a superannuated relation to the conference, and in the autumn of that year he was prostrated by a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs. After some weeks' illness he partially recovered, but gave unmistakable evidence that the fatal disease, consumption, which had hurried his former wife into eternity, and which was also at this time fastening its grasp more tightly upon his daughter spoken of, could not be satiated without numbering the husband and father among its victims. During the year 1857, and until the fall of 1858, his health gradually declined, although able to ride from place to place, and occasionally preach to the people. His last sermon was preached at Barnes' Corners, in the latter part of 1858, some four or five months prior to his death. From about the first of January, 1859, he did not go much from home, and in February, he was confined to his bed, gradually sinking into the arms of death, until the morning of the 27th of March, when he passed peacefully away to his inheritance above. And thus perished from the face of the earth another preacher of the gospel, who gave, while living, the best evidence of true piety, and who, when dying, gave undeniable proof of the power of true religion to sustain the saint in the dying hour. His last end was eminently peaceful, we might say triumphant. During the weeks and months of his decline, he expressed the strongest confidence in God, and patiently waited the approach of death.

Having thus briefly sketched his history, a few remarks,

relating to his standing as a man, a Christian, and Christian minister, will close this chapter.

As a man, Brother Kinney was beloved and respected by all classes, out of the church as well as in. They all admitted the goodness of his heart, and the honesty of his purpose. He was industrious, frugal, punctual to his engagements, honest in his business transactions, and so far as we know, a man in whom all placed the utmost confidence.

As a Christian, his brethren, who knew him well, can testify that if there ever was a meek, humble child of God, Brother Kinney was worthy of the name. His piety was of the unobtrusive kind, but of that description given by the apostle in his chapter on love: "Charity envieth not, is not puffed up, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Such was the religion of our dear departed brother.

As a minister, he was useful—not brilliant, not eloquent, not even what would be called popular, but still useful in the place where God and the church placed him. Being a man of sound judgment and rather prepossessing appearance, he gained the good will of his hearers wherever he went, and left them with a favorable impression of his character.

In conference, he scarcely ever took an active part in its proceedings—he preferred to remain in the back-ground, and let others do the work, which he thought they were better fitted to do than himself. Hence, his modesty restrained his intercourse with his brethren, which prevented them from getting much acquainted with him. But he sleeps with the dead, and awaits the sounding of that trumpet that will call his body to the "resurrection of the just."

CHAPTER XII.

REV. JAMES R. NICHOLS.*

THIS young and talented minister of the gospel, whose career was, alas! too brief, was born near the city of Montreal, Canada, on the 20th of March, 1836. Shortly after his birth, his parents removed to the township of Sherbrooke, in the same province, where they remained for about twelve years, and where James was favored with all the advantages of an education that the school of the place could give, and his tender age allow. His father when he removed to Sherbrooke was in possession of considerable property, but by sickness and a sudden reverse of fortune, he lost his earthly all, and the family, nine in number, who had never known want, were reduced to comparative poverty. To add to their distress, the illness of the father became chronic, so as to incapacitate him for labor, and render it impossible for him to provide for his household. The affectionate wife and mother, however, nerved herself for the task of providing for her invalid husband and her seven children. James at this period was twelve, and the oldest of the children was a boy two years older. To better their circumstances if possible, the family removed from Sherbrooke to the town of Constable, Franklin County,* New York. Up to this period there had been nothing to distinguish James from the other children, excepting that he was usually grave and silent, and subject to frequent seasons of melancholy; but now that the entire support of the family devolved upon the mother, he awoke as from a dream, and exhibited such a degree of energy and perseverance in helping his mother to secure a livelihood,

*We are indebted to Mrs. M. S. Nichols, formerly of Potsdam, relict of Rev. J. R. Nichols, for the most of the facts relating to her lamented companion, contained in this Memoir.



REV. J. R. NICHOLS.

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as was surprising to her and to others—the characteristics of the man began to develop themselves in the child. He armed himself at once with strength and courage for every task and every emergency. He sought and found employment about a mile from home, and labored faithfully and untiringly for many months, that he might furnish his quota to the support of his disabled father and the younger members of the family. His mother states that he often came home after the toilsome labors of the day, to inquire if she was in want of anything, or if there was anything he could do for her. Frequently he worked so late that he could not reach his home till the family had retired to rest for the night. He would at such times simply tap at the window, ask how they were, and retrace the steps of his weary, lonely mile! thus proving himself, though young, a faithful loving son and brother.

But while laboring thus how to earn his own bread and to provide for others, he was not inattentive to the reading of useful books. While other boys of his age were engaged in play and youthful sports, he might have been frequently seen during a respite from labor, studiously reading some volume of history or other book, and as he was endowed with a very retentive memory, and was a close observer of men and things, he at this early age, and without the help of teachers, acquired a large amount of information that proved useful to him in his riper years. Through the exertions of his mother, and by strict economy, he was enabled to attend school the winter that he was fourteen years of age. By working extra hours he earned money enough to purchase text books, among which was the University edition of Davies' Algebra, the latter book being mastered by him during that winter with very little assistance from his teachers. As his circumstances would not allow the use of a lamp or candle in the evening, he sat by the fire or in the moonlight, and eagerly drank from the fountains of knowledge. He has sometimes worked upon a problem

as long as he could see by moonlight, and on retiring to bed and going to sleep, his mind would still attempt a solution, and sometimes successfully, when he would shout in his still unbroken, but not silent slumber, "I have got it! I have got it!" when he would usually awaken, spring from his bed, strike a light, if the means were near, and write the solution on his slate, lest it should be forgotten before morning.

We mention these facts to show that James was no ordinary youth, and that notwithstanding all the embarrassments arising from poverty, he had the elements of true greatness in him; and had he lived long enough, those elements would have developed themselves in a career at once useful and glorious. In the spring after he was sixteen his family removed to Louisville, St. Lawrence County, New York. Here he labored as he could find suitable employment during the summer. The following autumn he attended a select school in Massena village, but in order to do this, he was obliged to walk four miles, nearly, morning and afternoon: for he was still too poor to pay for his board, and consequently had to board at home. But the travel he did not mind, as he used to study all the way to and from the school and the distance seemed short to him.

About this time he became interested in the subject of religion; he sought and found the Saviour, was baptized and soon united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Under whose preaching, or by whose instrumentality he was brought to the saving knowledge of the truth we are not able to say. Rev. Justin T. Alden was at that period the preacher on Massena charge, and Rev. Joseph DeLarme, the preacher at Louisville. Whoever was the instrument, a soul was happily converted to God, and James became in his moral nature a new creature.

The following winter, while yet only in his seventeenth year, he taught the district school at Massena Springs. He had many scholars older than himself by four or five years,

but such was their confidence in his ability to instruct them, that he succeeded well in his school, teaching the full term, and coming off with honor. After the close of his school, he went to labor on a farm at which he continued till the following winter, when he again engaged in teaching a school, in the town of Louisville. He intended from his winter's earnings to defray the expenses of a few terms at the academy, but as his school closed, the wants of his family were so pressing that he was obliged to use all his wages with the exception of nine dollars, in relieving those wants. This was a sad disappointment to him for a while, and nearly crushed his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge ; but he soon aroused himself and astonished his mother by informing her that he was going to school at the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary. His mother said to him : " My poor boy, you cannot go ; you cannot live three months on nine dollars, and you have no other means ! " " Well then, mother," he replied, " I must starve, for go to school I must ! " And go he did.

After arriving at Gouverneur and having made a purchase of the necessary text books, he had but a few shillings left. Nothing daunted, however, he procured a boarding place and went through the spring term. During the six weeks midsummer vacation he labored in the hay field, and in this way earned money enough to pay his board bill and had still a little left. He then rented a room and boarded himself during the fall term, although he has been heard to say since then, that he many times suffered from hunger and was often weak and faint for want of food. Here we find an instance of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties. Many would not be justifiable in pursuing such a course, but in his case he saw no other way ; an education must be secured at any sacrifice ; and nobly did he struggle against his temporal embarrassments, and right well did he succeed in overcoming them. At the close of the fall term he engaged to teach a school about six miles from the sem-

inary. As he desired to keep up with his classes, he employed his time when out of school, in pursuing his academical studies, and on Saturday of each week returned to Gouverneur and recited to Professor Roe. Thus he struggled and labored, alternately teaching, studying, working at manual labor until 1856, when the quarterly conference of Gouverneur station gave him license to preach, and also recommended him to the annual conference.

On the 28th of February, 1856, he was married to Miss Melita Lemon, then a student at Gouverneur, a young lady of great personal attractions and of superior endowments, and withal devoutly pious, and a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who still survives in feeble health, to mourn the swift departure of her earthly hopes, and the burial of her youthful joys. But she lives in expectation of meeting the object of her early affections, where no separation by death will ensue.

Having received license to preach, and expecting to join the traveling connection, new responsibilities now rested upon him, and he began to feel their weight. When he first went to Gouverneur, he had declined somewhat from his first love. He consequently lost the evidence of his acceptance with God, but being brought in contact with pious fellow students and Christian teachers, he soon found his way back again to the foot of the cross, and evinced by a consistent course of life the reality of the work within.

From the time he left his home to attend the seminary, if not before, he had determined to acquire a collegiate education, and just before he received his license to preach, he had intended that very spring to enter college as a sophomore, but when the call came, "go preach my gospel," he obeyed, hoping however that providence ere long would open the way by which his long desired wish might be gratified; or, if not gratified, by personal attendance at college, he might at least after having finished his four years theological course in conference, turn his attention more

particularly to the classics. Those who knew him well are of the opinion that such was his strength of purpose and power of mental effort, that he would have succeeded in becoming a ripe scholar, even without the aid of the living teacher, had not death intervened and called him to a contemplation of new subjects for investigation in the regions of light.

At the session of the conference of 1856, held in Syracuse, Brother Nichols, with a large number of promising young men, who are now able ministers of the gospel, was duly received on trial. In the list of "What preachers are admitted on trial?" we notice the names of W. X. Ninde, S. Call, D. B. White, H. M. Danforth, E. E. Kellogg, W. L. Tisdale, E. W. Pierce, G. M. Pierce, B. F. Wood, Samuel Marsh, and other able and reputed brethren. It is also a remarkable fact that three of those brethren, during the war of the rebellion, were commissioned officers in the volunteer army—not as chaplains, but as belligerents—B. F. Wood, D. B. White, and Samuel Marsh. The two former, after doing battle for their country at the seat of war, re-entered the itinerant ranks; the latter, who was fatally wounded at the battle before Richmond, on the 27th of June, 1862, and in a few days died, deserves a tribute from our pen, and we know of no more appropriate place for such than this connection.

Samuel Marsh was born in Hartland, Vermont, March 11, 1819. He early attended school, and while growing into manhood, was a student in the military institution, known as the Norwich University, in Vermont. On graduating, he removed to Ohio, commenced the study of medicine, returned to Vermont, attended several courses of medical lectures in Vermont and Massachusetts, received his diploma, married, and removed with his bride to Potsdam, N. Y., where he soon acquired an extensive practice as a physician, and became quite popular, not only as a man of science, but after his conversion, as a man of ardent piety, and of sterling

integrity. His conversion occurred in the fall of 1849, while the writer was pastor of the church in Potsdam. His agony of soul was intense, but when he believed in Jesus, so great was the change that he shouted aloud the praises of God. From that memorable evening, and especially that memorable moment, when, with the arms of Rev. I. L. Hunt (the presiding elder,) thrown around the sinner struggling for spiritual birth, and the glory of the Lamb had descended, has the religious life and conversation of Dr. Marsh been without reproach. A few years after his conversion, he accepted license to preach, and having engaged as professor of mathematics in the St. Lawrence Academy, at Potsdam, and intending, when through teaching, to enter the regular itinerant work, he united, as before stated, with the Black River Conference on trial, and received his appointment as teacher, for several years, from the bishop. Not finding time, however, to devote himself to the course of study prescribed by the conference, and to prepare himself as he desired for conference examination, he, after three years connection with the conference, requested a discontinuance of his relation. Remaining four years in the academy, to the regret of all the students and faculty, he resigned his position in the school, while to the joy of many others, he resumed his practice as a physician.

On the breaking out of the great rebellion in the spring of 1861, Brother Marsh was chosen lieutenant-colonel of the 16th Regiment, N. Y. Volunteers. He went with his regiment to the seat of war—had command of it at the battle of Bull Run—the 16th regiment being the last to leave the field, and then in the most orderly manner; he was also in the second day's battle before Richmond, where he received a fatal wound in the neck by a minie rifle ball, while in command of the regiment, (the colonel having been previously wounded,) and after seven days of intense suffering, breathed his last at Harrison's Landing, Virginia, on the 4th July, 1862. His remains were embalmed and sent home. They

received a public funeral, and thousands wept because the good physician, the accomplished teacher, the able preacher of the gospel, the brave officer, and above all, the pious Christian, was no more an inhabitant of earth. The writer knew him well. He was all but idolized by his friends and the community in general. His end was emphatically peaceful; he died a Christian soldier, and no doubt, while we write, sings in the Christian's heaven!

But to return to the sketch of Brother Nichols: When received on trial, as before stated, he was appointed to Fowler and Fine mission. Before receiving his appointment, he wrote his wife as follows:

“SYRACUSE, JUNE 23d, 1856.

MY DEAR WIFE:

“I have been received, and if I can learn my appointment, shall start for home to-morrow morning, yet I may not be there till next week.

“We are about to enter upon a new relation to the world. Let us, my dear, give ourselves unreservedly to the Lord, and enter with his blessing upon our duty, with increased and heightened zeal.

God be with you,

J. R. NICHOLS.”

The first year of his itinerant life was one of sore trial and discouragement to Brother Nichols and his companion. He found some disaffection among the members; religion was at a low ebb; his labors were arduous, some of his appointments being thirty miles from home; besides, his support was scanty—so scanty that in the fall, he was obliged to resort to school teaching for a livelihood. This of course added much to his labors; but he allowed nothing to interfere with his appointments, no matter what the weather or how deep the snow-drifts. Each Monday morning found him from twelve to twenty-four miles from his school, but he would start early, and generally arrived in season to open his school at nine o'clock. If a little late, his wife would open it. Thus he spent the winter, and when his school was closed,

he entered more fully and heartily into the work of the ministry. A few souls were converted and reclaimed, a few believers attained to a higher state of grace. Some warm and lasting friendships were created, but not satisfied with himself or his labors, he left the charge at the close of the year, with the impression that the year had been an unproductive one.

At the next conference, he passed an honorable examination, and was appointed to West Vienna charge, in Oneida County. After reaching his charge, he wrote his wife as follows:

"DEAR LITA:

"I have arrived safe and sound in the land of 'orchards and Dutchmen.' The country is beautiful, and the people are kind and sociable. I think you cannot but be pleased with our charge here. * * * Try, my dear, and compose your mind, for although it is a great way to come, I have no doubt but it will result in good to us and to others.

"Trusting this will find you in good health, I subscribe myself,

Yours Truly,

J. R. N."

In a few days he wrote again:

"I can wait no longer without writing. I am so lonesome in this land of strangers. * * * I presume you are sad and desponding, but you need not be so; and I do not believe that if you were here, I should be in the least.

This rainy weather tends to produce a melancholy sensation, so near akin to home-sickness, that I can hardly repress the impulse for rhyming. So here it goes:—

"Hills of my native north,
Must I bid now a long last adieu
To memories that come leaping forth
From a bosom that still dreams of you?

"Ah, Lita: Would that passion and folly never sullied the pure dreams of the soul in its meditative hours! Would to God that sin did not come doubly armed to tear down hope's fairest, purest structures! But so it is! Ah! stern reality, how different from our hopes art thou!

May God bless and keep you,

J. R. N."

In the above lines he seems to have had a presentiment that he never would visit his "loved native North" again. True, a few days after the above was written, he went North as far as Gouverneur after his wife; he spent but a short time, however, and returned to his circuit. The year passed away pleasantly and profitably to himself and the people of his charge, so that at the close of the year the quarterly conference by vote requested his return. He was, however, at the next session of the conference, appointed to the South Mexico charge, in Oswego County, having previously passed an honorable examination and been received into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Ames.

In South Mexico himself and wife found a very pleasant home, and with a light heart he began the labors of the year, attending to all the duties required of him as a Methodist preacher. About the last of November he contracted a severe cold which kept increasing in violence, until the beginning of December, when it assumed the form of congestion of the lungs.

On the 10th of December, he felt quite ill; a physician was called in. Next morning found him more comfortable, and able to converse freely, while his remarks would frequently revert to the subject of death, as though he thought it not improbable that he might soon be called away. He remarked to his young companion, who for some months had been in a feeble state of health: "If it were not for leaving you, my dear, so unprovided for, the knowledge that I must soon die would not affright me in the least; for," said he, "if we are Christians, and prepared for death as we ought ever to be, death for us will have no sting; it will be looked upon rather as the gate to endless joy." During the day his symptoms became more alarming. In the night his mind became wandering through the influence of opiates administered by his physician. The next morning his wife became alarmed about him, but his physician thought he might recover. During the day, his

mind wandering, he was engaged in preaching and praying much of the time, thus evincing the ruling passion strong in death. He lingered along until the midnight hour, when he quietly breathed his last. Thus died the young and promising J. R. Nichols, on the 12th day of December, 1859, in the twenty-third year of his age and the third of his ministry.

Before his last illness, Brother Nichols had been exposed to the small pox, and it was generally believed in the community where he resided that his disease was of the same character; hence but few of the neighbors dare venture near the house, and but few of the sisters who would have otherwise gladly assisted the dying itinerant's wife in her hour of deepest sorrow, could not have this privilege because of the excited state of public feeling on the subject of small pox; hence too, there could be no public funeral, although there had been no symptoms of the so much dreaded disease in the case of Brother Nichols. A hasty private funeral was all the case was thought to admit of, and he was carried to the grave in South Mexico by a few friends, while no female eye, but the eye of the widow, penetrated the precincts of the grave, for the reason that no female but herself was there. We relate these facts as furnished us, not by way of complaint, but to show how deeply distressed and lonely the bereaved widow must have felt under the circumstances, and also to draw a moral: That people should not allow themselves to be frightened until there is real cause for alarm. At the mention of *small pox*, we have known churches closed, schools broken up, trade suspended, roads barricaded, families forcibly separated, and the entire community wearing the face of gloominess and affright, as though the day of doom had arrived, while perhaps the result would be not a single death, or at most one or two in a population of thousands. Would that our people were better educated in regard to the nature of disease, and above all, the means of prevention; then the small pox, as any other disease, would be treated according to its nature, and

the community be saved a great deal of unnecessary alarm and agitation. The writer remembers an incident which once occurred in his own history: At the close of a Sabbath's service in Ogdensburg, and having returned to the parsonage, he was called upon by a number of persons who brought a young child to be baptized. They said the child was sick and was going to die. The baptismal service was read, and the child, which had been kept carefully covered up until that time, was presented for baptism. The covering on the face was taken off, and lo! the child was all broken out with the small pox! Did I throw it from me with disgust and horror? Did I run for my life? No! I as calmly and quietly as possible baptized the infant, and after the company had left, compared notes with my wife, went for the physician immediately, was vaccinated, together with my wife and three children, and although for weeks surrounded on all sides by cases of small pox, none of us took it, and ever since then have been inclined to wonder at the excitement produced by the mere mention of small pox, without perhaps a single attempt at prevention.

On the Sabbath following the death and burial of Brother Nichols, a funeral sermon was preached in the church at South Mexico, by Rev. Nathaniel Salsbury—Text: 1 John, iii. 2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," &c. This was a favorite text with Brother Nichols, and no doubt was truly applicable to the occasion. A plain marble slab has since been erected over his grave by his bereaved and sorrowing companion, who waits with anxiety to join her "other self" where parting is unknown.

A few words must suffice to sum up the character and virtues of this young minister of Jesus Christ:

1. He was energetic and persevering. A self-made man in the true sense of those words. Poor, but studious, he rose above the frowns or favors of fortune, and with unbending will raised himself to an honorable and useful position in society.

2. He was deeply pious and thoroughly devoted to his work. His letters breathe the spirit of piety, and she who knew him best bears testimony to his fervent love to God and man by which he was actuated.

3. He was an able minister, prompt, zealous, energetic, studious; he promised great usefulness to the church, but alas! the plant had just budded into blossoms when the latter withered and died.

4. In the social relations of life his short career was marked with all that is inviting and lovely as a son, a brother, a husband. Those who have read these pages will have noticed the depth of filial affection manifested by him even before he was converted, and the now stricken heart of the lonely widow is the tablet on which is written in indelible characters the conjugal affection he bore toward the chosen partner of his life.

5. As a member of the conference Brother Nichols was beloved and respected so far as he was known. The conference was large, consisting of over two hundred ministers. Brother Nichols had been but a short time among us, but those who were favored with his acquaintance learned to appreciate his talents and piety, and welcomed him as a fellow laborer in the gospel. We leave him now in expectation of meeting him again beyond the reach of care and pain.

CHAPTER XIII.

REV. JOHN E. STODDARD.*

JOHN EDWIN STODDARD was born in the town of Brookfield, Mass., March 5th, 1801. His parents were pious, and when Edwin was five years old, they removed to the town of Pinckney, Lewis County, N. Y. He remained with his parents until he was twenty-three years of age, when he bade them adieu and went to the village of Lafargeville, in Jefferson County. His leaving home was a great trial to his affectionate mother, who had hoped always to retain him at home as the support of her declining years. After leaving Lafargeville he went to Tylersville, in the same county, where he labored on the farm of Mr. Samuel Tyler for a period of five years. While in the employ of the latter, he became convinced of sin, and sought redemption through the blood of Jesus. He did not seek in vain, but soon found that the Lord is abundantly able to pardon. This important event occurred in 1828.

The following year, he united with a small Methodist class in the town of Champion, and soon he found that the Lord had other work for him to do besides laboring as a farmer. He felt it to be his duty to preach the gospel, but unwilling to give up the prospect of settling down in life, and securing a competency of this world's goods, he hesitated to give himself to the work of the ministry, but consented to receive a license to exhort, which was signed by Rev. J. H. Wallace, preacher in charge of Black River Cir-

* Much of the matter contained in this Memoir is from the pen of Miss Arnilla L. Stoddard, daughter of the deceased. We have availed ourselves largely of her own language, and hereby tender to her our acknowledgements for the filial manner in which she has responded to the call to furnish information in regard to her father.

cuit, and is dated March 24th, 1830. He sustained the relation of exhorter until June 9th, 1832, when he received license to preach at the hand of Rev. Josiah Keyes, presiding elder of the district. Before receiving his license to preach his mind become sorely perplexed in relation to his duty. His daughter, Miss Arnilla Stoddard, writes as follows in relation to his trials on this point, and also of a wonderful dream which he had, and which seemed to settle the question in his mind :

"I have heard my father say that when he was young he intended, if industry and economy would make a man rich, he would be rich. After he experienced religion, and felt it his duty to preach the gospel, he thought he could not give up his plans for life and become a homeless wanderer over the earth. He had collected together considerable property, had purchased a farm, and being as he thought wholly unqualified, both as it respects talents and learning, for the work of the ministry, he purposed in his heart to do all that lay in his power to support that gospel, which he felt he could not preach. But his plans were thwarted, and his farm was gone, he hardly knew how, and the rest of his property scattered to the four winds. Another trial was that of leaving his mother who was in feeble health. He was her eldest son, she loved him as only a fond mother can love, an affection which he reciprocated with all his heart. She expected to live with him in her declining years, and it was a severe trial to her as well as to him, that he should leave her. Thus his mind was perplexed, and he was in a strait between two seemingly conflicting duties.

"While his mind was thus exercised, in company with Mr. (now Rev.) Hubert Graves, who was his class-mate, he attended a quarterly meeting at Champion. On Saturday evening, after an excellent prayer-meeting, he retired, praying that if it was his duty to preach, God would, in some way, make it known to him. With this prayer, he fell asleep, and had the following remarkable dream: He dreamed he was taken sick, that his parents called the family physician, who pronounced his case hopeless; he felt himself growing weaker, and at last died. Weeping friends stood around his corpse, and shrouded his body for the tomb.

An angel came, and conveyed his spirit to the celestial world. With one glance, he beheld all the beauty and grandeur of the promised land; saw glorified spirits bowing before the throne, and paying homage to him who had loved them, and marked them in his own blood. The angel then accompanied him to the bottomless pit, and showed him the misery and woe of those in the regions of despair, and bade him listen to the wail of the lost spirits in their unutterable torments, and then told him to go back to earth, and warn sinners to shun that place of torment and endless death. They then came back to earth, his spirit re-entered his body, and he arose in the habiliments of the grave."

Such was his dream, and such its influence on his mind, that he dared not any longer disobey the call of heaven. He informed his mother of his purpose, and received, as before stated, his license to preach. In the following August, he was employed by the Rev. Squire Chase, presiding elder of Potsdam District, to supply Chateaugay Circuit, with Rev. George C. Woodruff as preacher in charge. This circuit at that time embraced a large extent of territory, mostly new and unbroken, and including within its bounds, not only portions of Franklin and Clinton Counties, in New York, but quite a portion of the townships and villages of Canada, immediately north of the state line. The traveler had often to find his way from place to place by marked trees; the woods were infested with wild beasts, and frequently our brother, while riding on horseback from Chateaugay Corners to Ellenburgh, has heard the wolves howl on either side of him, and sometimes so near him as to be able to discover their lank forms, their fiery eye-balls, and their savage teeth, as they snarled and growled at each other. Some of the rivers and creeks had to be forded, as there were few bridges in certain parts of the circuit, or if found, were constructed of poles and logs. On one occasion, while crossing a pole-bridge during a freshet, Brother Stoddard met with quite an adventure. On his way to an appointment in lower Canada, he was obliged to cross what is known as Ellis's Flat, which is low and marshy and divided by a small creek running

through it, that frequently, in case of heavy rain or sudden thaw, overflows its banks. This creek was crossed by a pole-bridge, which in ordinary times was considered safe. One Friday morning, in the spring of the year, he left his usual stopping place for an appointment, which he reached on Saturday evening. It having rained continually the two days he was on the road, he was thoroughly drenched. On Monday he started to return; and when he reached the flat before spoken of, he found it covered with water, but being well mounted on a good horse, he resolved to push on through the water, trusting in providence for deliverance. Before he reached the bridge of poles he was obliged to get on his knees on the saddle, so deep was the water, and when he arrived at the bridge, he found that covered with water, but otherwise it appeared in good condition. He passed on until he reached the middle of the bridge, when he found some of the poles afloat. Not knowing what to do, he looked back, and found the poles which he had just crossed were loosened and were also afloat. He could not retreat; to go forward was equally perilous; upon either hand was the roaring, foaming torrent, made still more turbulent and dangerous by the loosened masses of ice which lodged below the bridge. To go on seemed almost impossible, to stay was death; so drawing up the rein of his faithful steed he urged him along the dangerous pathway, the logs or poles the meanwhile sinking beneath his horse's feet or sliding and rolling as he stepped upon them. When near the end of the bridge, he found it entirely gone. The noble horse, as if conscious of its responsibility, plunged fearlessly into the roaring torrent. In the leap, Brother Stoddard was thrown far forward upon the neck of his horse, to which he clung until the latter reached the shore with his precious burthen. Emptying the water from his saddle bags, our brother re-mounted, and proceeded on his way, thankful for his deliverance from death.

Such were some of the incidents in the experience of itin-

erant preachers within the present Black River Conference, as late as 1833. Brother Stoddard's success, however, in winning souls to Christ was such as amply to repay him for all such exposures to danger. At the close of his first year's itinerancy, he was again employed by the presiding elder, and returned to the same charge, where he labored as efficiently and acceptably as during the former year. He also united himself in marriage during this year, with Miss Edna Walsworth, of Westford, Chittenden County, Vermont, who has cheerfully borne with him the toils of the itinerancy, and still survives him in a state of widowhood.

The year 1834 was mostly spent by him in his old occupation of farming, while he assisted Revs. C. L. Dunning and B. F. Brown, preachers on Chateaugay Circuit, in their Sabbath appointments. In 1835, he was employed by Rev. Silas Comfort, presiding elder, as an assistant to Rev. James Erwin, on the same circuit. Thus for four consecutive years he preached on the same circuit and to the same people, an evidence that his labors were appreciated.

In the year 1836, having been recommended by the quarterly conference of Chateaugay Circuit, he united with the Black River Conference on trial, was ordained deacon, having preached four years as a local preacher, and was appointed to Heuvelton Circuit, which at that period embraced Heuvelton, Depeyster, DeKalb and Hermon, together with a portion of Lisbon. His old friend, Benjamin F. Brown, was again his colleague as preacher in charge. In 1837, he was continued on trial, and sent to Bombay Circuit as preacher in charge, with Rev. John Lowrey as junior preacher. His colleague subsequently withdrew from the conference and the church, during the Wesleyan secession of 1843, and became a preacher of that new denomination. At the time of his connection with Bombay Circuit, he was a pious, zealous young man, and through his labors and those of Brother Stoddard, many precious souls were converted during the year. In 1838, at the conference in Fulton

having passed a creditable examination, Brother Stoddard was received into full connection, and ordained elder. He received his appointment to Louisville Circuit, with Rev. Henry O. Tilden as junior colleague. There were on the circuit eight Sabbath and three week day appointments, and a number of extra protracted meetings were held with success during the year. At one of these, held in Waddington, more than a hundred professed religion, and over eighty united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1839, he was appointed to Canton Circuit, which then embraced the present South Canton, Bucksbridge and Madrid charges, being assisted by Rev. Elijah Smead. It was a year of great prosperity. The following year, he went to Heuvelton and Depeyster Circuit, where he had before labored, and was equally successful and prosperous as a minister.

While traveling this circuit this latter year, an incident occurred, which he afterward related as follows: During the winter he was passing from Depeyster to Heuvelton where he resided. . It was evening, there was no moon, but the sky was cloudless and the stars shone with brilliant splendor, casting their glittering rays upon the pure, hard-crusted snow. In going through a piece of woods, his horse, a high spirited animal, became suddenly frightened at something, and as suddenly stopped. The driver could perceive nothing ahead except what seemed to be a large stump. Applying the whip he urged forward his horse, and with difficulty got him to within a few feet of the stump, when either from behind or from the top of the stump, a large animal jumped into the road in front of the horse, and trotted leisurely along, stopping and looking back every few minutes. Although the horse was unwilling to follow such a strange leader, yet the driver knew that to turn round and retreat would be disastrous, probably to both himself and beast. He accordingly urged his horse forward faster and faster, applying the whip with vigor, and making all the noise he could until he sensibly gained upon the unknown animal, which in

turn had evidently become frightened and increased its speed until it came to a small hill, where it stopped, and awaited the approach of the sleigh. As the latter came on with increased velocity, the animal, thinking by this time that "discretion is the better part of valor," and that he or she "that lives to fight, and runs away, may live to fight another day," and just as the horse reached him, leaped from the road into the woods; the horse, finding his enemy in the rear instead of before him, became anxious, seemingly, to leave that enemy as far and as fast behind as possible; the driver coinciding in opinion with the horse, and with an onward dash and long strides, the woods and the animal were soon in the distance. Next day, Brother Stoddard, accompanied by some hunters, visited the scene of his exploit on the previous evening. They examined the track of the animal and pronounced it to be that of a panther of the largest size. Shortly afterward, the animal was found and killed by another hunting party. It is probable that on the evening in question, had not Brother Stoddard appeared to assume an offensive attitude, the panther would have attacked him or his horse.

In 1841, Brother Stoddard did not attend the conference. Being ill, and partially worn down with his incessant labors, while the conference was in session he visited the celebrated Massena Springs, where he spent two weeks to the advantage of his health. He was appointed to Hammond Circuit, with Wm. W. Wood as his colleague, but who failing to go on the charge, Brother Stoddard had to supply it alone. It was a year of excessive toil, but of great prosperity. About eighty were added to the church, and he formed two new societies, which have since become regular Sabbath appointments. The following year he was returned to Hammond, with Rev. Wm. Peck, (brother of Doctors George and Jesse T. Peck,) as his colleague. This year they held three protracted meetings, one at Hammond Corners, where there were from thirty to forty conversions,

resulting in the formation of a new class of thirty-four members. At the Oswegatchie chapel they had quite an extensive revival, and although annoyed exceedingly by the Adventists or Millerites, the meeting progressed gloriously, and a large proportion of the people professed to have obtained a good hope through faith. Nearly two hundred joined the Methodist society on trial.

But in the midst of spiritual prosperity and rejoicing, his health, in consequence of his continued and arduous labors, nearly entirely failed him, so that he was obliged to desist from preaching, excepting once on each Sabbath, and even then his pulpit efforts were attended with much weakness and pain. He and his family were also called to pass through the fire of affliction by the loss of their youngest child.

At the conference of 1843, he was obliged, in consequence of feeble health and impaired strength, to take a superannuated relation to that body, a relation that was not changed until the Lord called him home. It was a sore trial to our brother to be laid aside from the active duties of the ministry. His soul was in the work, but when it became evident that his strength would not allow of active labor, he acquiesced in the will of God, and found comfort in the reflection that it is possible to glorify God in suffering as well as in doing. Being thus laid aside from pastoral work, and being a poor man as it regards worldly gear, it became necessary for him to employ his little remaining physical strength in supporting his family. He therefore took a contract for the purchase of a piece of land in Morristown, which he afterward succeeded in paying for, and on which he erected a small but comfortable house. To stock his small farm and procure food for his family, he had to sell the greater part of his library, and thus the weary way-worn pilgrim had to begin as it were, his life over, in providing for his household.

Though laid aside from the pastorate he was by no means

idle as a minister, so far as strength would allow. He occasionally preached and assisted the circuit ministers in their labors, and attended funerals when called upon. As there was no church edifice in Morristown village belonging to the Methodists, he with other brethren became anxious to have a house erected where they might worship God. They made the attempt and succeeded, but shortly after it was completed, and during a protracted meeting which was being held in it, it was consumed by fire. But the society, though cast down by this calamity, were not discouraged. Headed by their pastor, Rev. J. H. Corbin and Brother Stoddard, they resolved to build again. The latter spent much of his time in this enterprise. In soliciting donations and subscriptions, he traveled extensively, even into Canada, for that purpose. He collected money, employed workmen, and exerted all his powers in the accomplishment of his object. When the house was re-erected, and his anxiety removed, such was the reaction on his system that he was prostrated by a severe illness, which left him so feeble and emaciated that he was unable to attend the services of the sanctuary in the house he had done so much in erecting. This was a sore trial to his patience, but still he calmly said, "The will of the Lord be done."

Though prizing highly the public means of grace, for two long years he was deprived the privilege of attending them. At length, toward the close of the year 1860, his strength began to rally a little, and he became very anxious to attend a love feast again with his brethren on earth. His wife thinking it was more than he could endure, endeavored to dissuade him from going to the quarterly meeting, but he replied, that if he went not that time, he probably would not be able to attend another on earth, for he felt that before another quarter should pass he would be called home. He accordingly went, and enjoyed the quarterly meeting as those only can who have for so long a period been deprived of the privilege of the sanctuary. On the 11th of January

following, at the dying request of a little boy, of whom he was particularly fond, that his old friend should officiate at his funeral, he preached a sermon on the occasion. His text was *Phillipians i, 21*. "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain." He preached an able and affecting discourse.

The effort made in preaching this, his last sermon, did not appear to produce any immediate ill effect, but a week afterward he was unable to leave his house. A physician was called, who pronounced his disease dropsy of the heart and lungs. He experienced great difficulty in breathing, and was prevented from reclining, except for a few moments at a time. Feeling that his end was drawing nigh, he sent for his absent children, and arranged his temporal affairs. As friends and neighbors called in to see him, he had a word of Christian counsel and advice for each one, and bade them an affectionate and final farewell. As his younger sister stood by his bedside, he said to her: "Almira, I cannot talk much with you now,—you and I have had our talks long ago; but what we cannot say, we will think all over." After a severe paroxysm of coughing, and while panting for breath, he called the family together and taking the hand of each, he laid his other hand on his breast, and said to them:

"Here's my heart, and here's my hand,
To meet you in that heavenly land,
Where we shall part no more."

"No more! no more forever! Oh cling to the Saviour; don't give up the Saviour!"

After resting a short time, he requested that dinner might be prepared, that he might sit with the family once more around the table. When dinner was ready, and the family and a few friends were seated around the board, he looked calmly upon the group before him, his eyes beaming with celestial light, he reverently bowed his head and invoked the divine blessing. He then requested the bread to be passed to each one, and desired them to eat, taking a small piece himself. He then took his cup, looked at it a moment as if meditat-

ing and praying, put it to his lips, sipped a little of the contents, passed it to his wife, saying: "Drink, and pass it around!" When all had partaken, he further remarked: "We have had as near the sacrament as we could have. It is the last time I shall sit with you at the table," and so it subsequently proved. On another occasion, he called his family together, telling them he wanted to have a class-meeting. He asked each a few questions in regard to their state of mind, and exhorted them to fidelity; then turning to his wife, he took her hands in his, and commended her and her children to the care of her Almighty Friend. To a clerical brother, who called to see him a short time before he died, he said: "And so you came to see if the old man had gone, did you? Well, I am here yet, but am all ready." To another he said: "Some call it the *dark* valley and shadow of death, but I think they are mistaken." Thus, in pain and feebleness extreme, he lay from day to day, until the 10th of February, when his pain all left him, and he continued in a quiet, peaceful state, until the morning of the 12th. On this morning, his daughter Arnilla, leaning over him, said: "Good morning, father. How do you do this morning?" Raising his head and gazing out of the window, he replied: "It is a good morning for me my child." These were his last words. He was evidently holding communion with the spirit world, and at nine o'clock in the forenoon of February 12th, 1861, he, without a struggle or a sigh, breathed his life away; and thus died another holy man, in the sixtieth year of his age, and thirtieth of his ministry.

By his own request, his funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Peleg Barker, the preacher on the charge, the services being held in Edwardsville—a hamlet on Black Lake—a few miles from Morristown village, where his remains lie interred. A large concourse of people were present on the occasion, who came to testify their respect for the deceased minister.

Although Brother Stoddard had been in the ministry for nearly thirty years, from a variety of circumstances he was not extensively known in the conference, either by the preachers or members. As we have seen, he was employed some four years by the presiding elders to labor in an extreme portion of the conference territory. During his nine years of effective service, he labored seven years in St. Lawrence County, and two years in Franklin County. A number of times, we believe, he was not present at the seat of conference, and when there, being of an extremely modest and retiring disposition, there were comparatively few who formed his acquaintance, and for eighteen years he was on the superannuated list. It was the privilege of the author to become personally acquainted with him, as we were classmates in conference, and what we say of him as a man and as a minister, we say partly from our own knowledge, and partly from the testimony of others.

Brother Stoddard was tall, with fair hair and a light blue eyes. He was rather round shouldered, and had something of a stooping gait. His appearance was not what would be called attractive, and yet there was a pleasing, winning way about his manner that did not fail to attract all who formed his acquaintance. His literary attainments were quite reputable, for although not an extensive reader, he had a very retentive memory and never was obliged to commit to writing anything he did not wish to forget, as his memory would always retain what was once impressed thereon. This happy faculty he retained in a remarkable degree to the close of life, and by it he rendered himself exceedingly useful and somewhat popular as a preacher. His labors as a minister of the gospel were highly appreciated by the people on the respective charges where he labored. Although not trained in the schools of philosophy and science, he was a successful minister—far more so than many who glory in the honorary title of “Doctor;” for on nearly every charge where he preached, he had the indispensable

ministerial qualification of being able to win souls to Christ, and the hundreds of conversions under his ministry abundantly prove that God had really called him into the work. He was the Lord's workman, and one that need not to be ashamed.

There could be no doubt of the sincere piety of Brother Stoddard. He was a holy, upright Christian, both in the church and in all the public and private walks of life. In his family he manifested a steady consistent devotion. He loved the family altar and family religion, and no matter how urgent his business, or how feeble his health, family prayer was constantly maintained, and the pure fire of family devotion kept constantly burning. For two years before his death, he was unable to kneel, and attended to family prayer sitting in his chair, much of the time unable to speak above a whisper. As a husband and father, his character was irreproachable. His family loved him with a pure and fervent love, and his memory is treasured up by them as a legacy given them by heaven in return for the gift taken from them.

CHAPTER XIV.

REV. HARVEY CHAPIN.*

OUR venerable brother, the Rev. Harvey Chapin, was born in Tyringham, Berkshire County, Mass., October 2d, 1787. When he was nine years old, his father removed his family to Paris, Oneida County, N. Y. The country being then comparatively new, Harvey grew up to manhood amidst the

*The main facts as to the early life of Father Chapin were furnished by his son, Rev. Almon Chapin, since deceased, and whose Memoir appears in a subsequent page of this volume.

hardships and inconveniences of a newly settled region, and with those educational advantages only afforded by the common school.

At the age of eighteen, he became the subject of converting grace, and obtained a clear evidence of his acceptance with God, which evidence he retained during his long and useful life. Immediately upon his conversion, he identified himself with the people called Methodists, at that time despised and persecuted as a religious body of Christians. But notwithstanding the opposition of an ungodly world, and the mistaken zeal of professed Christians against the "new sect everywhere spoken against," young Harvey was willing to bear his full share of the obloquy and reproach so freely bestowed upon the Methodists, as a body of fanatics, heretics, and interlopers. He had found salvation through their instrumentality and prayers, and in spite of opposition, he said: "This people shall be my people, and their God my God."

The Methodists of this day can little realize what it cost to be identified with that body, no longer than sixty years ago. Not only were their names cast out, and all manner of evil spoken falsely against them, but they were often disturbed in their worship and assailed in their persons by the unholy throng. True, these things occasionally transpire at the present day, but the sentiment of the community frowns down any continued attempt of the kind; but in those days, the wicked were too often upheld in their deeds of evil by public sentiment and denominational bigotry. While the early Methodists were met for worship in their log houses, the rabble would frequently gather around, and insultingly cry: "Glory! Hallelujah!" and in every way strive to annoy the worshipers and break up their meetings. On one occasion, while Brother Chapin was engaged in earnest prayer with others for the unconverted, attempts were made by the wicked to cause him to desist. Failing in this, one more bold and daring than the rest, with an oath, struck at

his head with a loaded whip, which would have resulted in a serious if not fatal injury, had not a friendly hand arrested the blow. At another time, the rabble took the door from its hinges, and while the praying ones were on their knees, threw the door upon them. These are only specimens of the attempts made to disturb and otherwise harm the self-sacrificing band of zealous Christians.

When Harvey was twenty years of age, he was appointed class-leader, thus showing the esteem and the confidence in which he was held by his brethren. On the 19th of February, 1809, when he was a little more than twenty-one years of age, he was united in marriage to Miss Dolly Campbell, who was in all respects worthy of him, and who, during all the future years of his earthly pilgrimage, cheerfully encouraged him in the path of duty, sharing in all his toils and trials, rejoicing in all his triumphs and successes, and bearing with him the burdens connected with the subsequent life of labor in the vineyard of the Lord; and who, after an active and laborious life of nearly fifty-three years, in which they trod life's highway together, still survives her companion, and patiently and piously waits until her change shall come.

After having served the church two years as a class-leader, he was, at the age of twenty-two, licensed as an exhorter, which office he held for three years, when, at the oft-repeated solicitations of his brethren, he consented to receive license as a local preacher during the year 1812. In the year 1818, he was ordained local deacon by Bishop Roberts, at the conference held at Lansing, N. Y., and in 1826, he was ordained as a local elder by Bishop Hedding, at Utica, N. Y. During those years of his local ministry, he was accustomed to preach twice, and quite frequently three times, on the Sabbath. Living on a large four weeks' circuit, he was often called upon to attend funerals in his own and adjoining towns, to assist at quarterly meetings, grove meetings, camp meetings, and in different ways to labor as a minister of Christ. These various claims and duties necessarily called him from home

much of his time, and though seriously interfering with his secular business, he probably never received to exceed fifty dollars for his ministerial services, until regularly employed on a circuit. Nearly one-third of his time on week days, to say nothing of his Sunday labors, was thus for many years given to the church without compensation. The societies in those days were generally composed of the poorer classes of people, who were barely able to furnish to the *circuit* preachers enough to keep soul and body together, and keep their families from starvation. While, therefore, Brother Chapin gave so much of his time to the church without reward, he had to labor the more diligently with his own hands to supply his personal wants, the wants of his family and those of his aged parents, and subsequently, the parents of his wife, who spent their latter years in his family.

During many years of his local ministry, his house was the place for the weekly prayer-meetings, and under his roof many precious souls were, from time to time, converted to God. This period of his life and labor was spent on old Westmoreland Circuit, in the Genesee Conference, and the places of his most frequent labors were the towns of Paris, Vernon and Augusta. At many of his preaching places, revivals of religion occurred, and at one place, he was instrumental in forming the first class, which is now one of the most prominent stations in the Oneida Conference.

In the year 1826-7, he was employed by the presiding elder, on Steuben Circuit, in connection with Rev. Chandlee Lambert, where he labored with great acceptability and usefulness. Being under the necessity of leaving his family at their former home, he could only be with them from Monday night till Saturday morning once in four weeks, and frequently not as much as that. After his year of service on that circuit, he continued to labor as a local preacher until 1831, when he was again employed on Starkbridge station, in the Oneida Conference, where he also labored efficiently and acceptably.

In the year 1832, he joined the Oneida Conference on trial, and was appointed to Sanquoit station. In 1833, he labored on Herkimer Circuit; the following year, Herkimer village was made a station, and Brother Chapin was appointed to it. In 1835, he removed to Sandy Creek Circuit, and took up his residence in Ellisburgh. In 1836, he became a member of the Black River Conference, being received into full connection at its first session in Watertown, and was appointed to the village of Adams, where he remained one year. 1837-8, he labored at Pulaski; 1839-40, at Jordan, and then went to Gouverneur, where he staid but one year; then to Camden, where he remained the constitutional term of two years; from thence to Vienna, where he preached one year, and at the end of that year, being in feeble health, he took a superannuated relation to the conference, which relation he sustained until the close of his long and useful life.

But though superannuated, he was not inactive in the vineyard of his Master. After the death of the Rev. John Loveys, at Rodman, in 1849, Brother Chapin was engaged to supply the charge, which he did for nearly a year, and labored as his strength would allow; and when free from the cares and responsibilities of a charge, he was always willing to expend his strength for the up-building of the church of the living God.

In all his fields of labor, there were more or less converted to God, and added to the church. While in Camden, the great Wesleyan secession took place, and some twenty—among them several prominent leading members of the society in Camden—left the church, and many feared that the old church in that place would become extinct; but soon after the secession occurred, peace being restored, a glorious revival of religion took place, about eighty were added to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and from that period until the present, they have enjoyed constant prosperity as a church.

Toward the close of the summer of 1861, Brother Chapin was attacked with an affection of the lungs, which resulted in the total consumption of one lobe of the lung. His already enfeebled health had still more declined during the year, and when attacked by his last sickness, his formerly strong constitution did not rally to its aid. For five weeks he suffered severely in his physical system. So rapid and severe was the progress of his disease, that he was able to converse but little, and it is probable that he was irrational most of the time ; but during his lucid intervals, he expressed, as best he could, his trust and confidence in God his Maker, and in Christ his Saviour. On being reminded of his labors and success in the ministry, he quickly disclaimed all credit for, or merit in himself, saying that he was unworthy, and if he had been of any use to the church, he was glad of it, but still gave all the glory to Christ. It no doubt would have been gratifying to all his friends who survive him, to have had his dying counsels, and his testimony to the power of grace in the last conflict. But God ordered otherwise. He had so long borne testimony to the truth, as it is in Jesus, that it needed no additional testimony to convince his friends of his entire fitness for death, and his full preparation for an inheritance among those who are sanctified. Neither do his brethren in the ministry need such testimony to convince them of Father Chapin's readiness to die. Had he expressed no word in his last sickness, such is their knowledge of the man, that every lingering doubt is forbidden, as it regards his acceptance with God.

And after all, is there not at times too much stress laid on dying declarations ? We know it is pleasant to have friends die shouting and singing their way to heaven, and when the lamp of life has gone out, to call to remembrance their ecstasy and joy while "crossing the river." But can we be always sure that in such moments of transport the brain is unaffected by disease or medicine—that the mind is sufficiently clear to enable the dying one to see all that is before

him? We know that God gives dying grace to his people, that to some he vouchsafes holy triumph in the dying hour, but we know also that from many a saint, whose death has been precious in his sight, has he for wise reasons withheld the spirit of rapture so far as regards the outward expression. For our own part, we have long been convinced that the important thing is to live right before God, and he will take care that when we die no good thing will be withheld from them that have walked uprightly.

But to return to the subject of our sketch: "Father" Chapin, as for many years he had been called by his sons and daughters in the gospel, after an illness of five weeks, calmly fell asleep in Christ, on the 14th day of September, 1861, he being at the time nearly seventy-four years of age, and in the forty-ninth year of his ministry. His funeral sermon was preached at Washingtonville, by Rev. B. E. Whipple, pastor of the church in that place, the text for the occasion being those inspiring words of sacred writ, "For our rock, is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges." On his tombstone, erected by his sons to the memory of a revered father, there is inscribed the appropriate inscription:

"HE THAT GOETH FORTH AND WEEPETH; BEARING
PRECIOUS SEED, SHALL DOUBTLESS COME AGAIN,
WITH REJOICING, BEARING HIS SHEAVES WITH
HIM."

Having thus traced the history of our departed friend, brother and father, from the cradle to the grave, what remains to be said is in reference to him as a man and minister, and in this respect, our task, though short, is not unwelcome. Unlike the preacher who, on being called upon to preach a funeral sermon, dreads making any allusion to the deceased, because nothing good and much evil might be said of him; far otherwise! Of Father Chapin, we know of much good, and no evil that attached itself to his moral and ministerial life.

Through a long series of years, by an undeviating course of Christian fidelity, he always manifested the spirit and manners of an humble follower of Jesus Christ. In his family relations he was the affectionate husband and the kind and indulgent father. Himself and beloved companion, who shared with him for so many years the vicissitudes of life, were patterns of meekness, gentleness and patience. "None knew them but to love them," and to the pious training of their children is no doubt to be attributed the fact that their three sons, Harvey, Ezra and Almon, have been called to the ministry of the same gospel as preached by their now departed father—the former, having been for some years an influential member of the Black River Conference, and filling some of its most important stations, but who on account of an affection of the throat was obliged to desist from public speaking, and who has for some years been a successful medical practitioner,* the other for many years a member of the same conference, and the able chairman, year after year, of the board of conference stewards, but who has since deceased.

As a preacher, Father Chapin was above mediocrity, his talents being of a superior order. His sermons were fraught with good sense, and always attended by the divine unction. He was a diligent pastor, visiting his flock, hunting up the wandering, cautioning the wayward, and encouraging the faithful. As a member of the conference, his opinions were always received with respect, and generally adopted. He was a true and tried friend of the Methodist Episcopal Church, loyal to her government, partial to her usages, and ardently attached to her economy and discipline. He looked with surprise on attempts at reform, so far as they related to the organic law of the church, while at the same time he was anxious that as a body of Christians, the church should

* Since writing the above, the Rev. Harvey E. Chapin, M. D., and the Rev. Almon Chapin have both deceased and joined their revered father in the spirit world.





REV. L. WHITCOMB.

purify itself and stand aloof from all complicity with evil. As he was loyal to the church of his choice, so was he loyal to the civil government of the land. His soul abhorred treason in all its forms, whether manifested in overt acts of rebellion, or by the more insidious and not less dangerous and dishonorable practice of sympathizing with traitors. In a word, he was a good man, a faithful minister, a successful preacher, a humble Christian, and what more can be said of him?

“Servant of God, well done;
Rest from thy lov’d employ,
The battle’s fought, the victory won,
Enter thy master’s joy!”

For a further and fuller account of this excellent Father in Israel, the author begs leave to refer the reader to Chapter LXI of this work.

CHAPTER XV.

REV. LEWIS WHITCOMB.*

THIS estimable man and godly minister was born in Windsor, Vermont, on the 17th day of April, 1800. When Lewis was two years of age, his father removed from the east side of the Green Mountains, to the town of Granville, Washington County, New York, near the Western boundary of Vermont. From childhood he was of a serious turn of mind; indeed, his constitutional peculiarities were such that it is doubtful whether even in childhood he could be otherwise than seriously disposed. Not that his seriousness

* Rev. Samuel Call will accept the author’s thanks for the information collected and sent for this Memoir—also Rev. A. L. Smith.

was the result of melancholy preying on his mind, or the effect of gloomy foreboding thoughts; far otherwise. Though always serious, he was always cheerful; though seldom known to laugh or engage in joking, he manifested generally a peaceful, inquiring and inquisitive turn of mind. His seeming taciturnity was more the result of studious thoughtfulness and reflection than anything else.

At the age of fifteen he became the subject of converting grace. Although we have no recorded narrative of his religious emotions or exercises, immediately before or after that important event in his life's history, we venture to say that when Lewis Whitcomb became a Christian his conversion was at once intelligent and real, he knew what he was about and whereunto his profession of Christianity would lead. Having thus given his heart to God in the spring-time of life, he soon after united with the Congregationalist Church, of which the justly celebrated Lemuel Haynes—widely known as “Father Haynes”—a colored man, was then or subsequently the pastor; a man who, though his skin was dark, had a heart that was purified and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It was probably during Brother Whitcomb's connection with Father Haynes' church that the circumstance took place which gave rise to the following anecdote. And here it might not be out of place to remark, that the colored preacher was noted for his anecdotes and witticisms. The one about to be related, we heard stated by Rev. Elijah Plumb, D. D., of Potsdam, who was well acquainted with Rev. Mr. Haynes, and who much admired his piety and talent. When the news first reached America, that the exile, Napoleon Bonaparte, was dead, a feeling of relief was experienced in the hearts of many, while others looked upon it as a very sad event; for Napoleon had his admirers and non-admirers on this side of the Atlantic—those who thought him little less than angelic, and those who believed him to be little better than a demon. To neither of these classes did Father Haynes belong, still

he believed him to be a proud, ambitious usurper and tyrant, and whose death was a blessing rather than a serious loss to the world. Otherwise thought one of Brother Haynes' good deacons, the latter believing Napoleon to be a great and good man, and whose death ought to be noticed, and whose memory ought to be respected by churches and ministers generally. The deacon meeting the pastor one day soon after the reception of the news, something like the following conversation took place :

Deacon : " Well, Mr. Haynes, don't you intend to preach a sermon on the occasion of the death of Bonaparte ? "

Haynes : " Why, no, deacon, I had not intended so to do. "

Deacon : " Well, I think such a melancholy event ought to be improved upon by ministers. "

Haynes : " Do you really think so ; and that it is my duty to preach a funeral sermon on such an occasion ? "

Deacon : " Yes, I think it is, Mr. Haynes. "

Haynes : " Well, I don't know but you are right ; and that I had better preach a sermon as you suggest ; and even now a very appropriate text occurs to me, which, if I preach the sermon, will be the foundation for my remarks. "

Deacon, brightening up : " Will you allow me to ask what is the text suggested to your mind ? "

Haynes : " Certainly, deacon. You will find it in the 1st chapter of the book of Job, latter clause of the 21st verse. "

Deacon : " How does it read, Mr. Haynes ? "

Haynes : " The Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord ! "

The well-meaning deacon, guessing the opinion Mr. Haynes had formed of the character of Napoleon I, wisely concluded not to press the subject any farther, and to let the pastor have his own way in the matter.

With the Congregational Church, Brother Whitcomb remained a pious and exemplary member for a period of twelve years. Little was known by him at this time of the

doctrines or usages of the Methodists. Methodism was comparatively unknown in the neighborhood where he resided. At length, in 1827, a camp meeting was held in Stillwater, Saratoga County, New York, near the old battle ground, which some of Brother Whitcomb's neighbors attended and several were converted. Three of these returning home, commenced holding Methodist prayer-meetings under the direction of John Potter, a brother-in-law of Brother Whitcomb. In his 19th year Brother Whitcomb was married to Miss Elmira Hills, and having a house that would accommodate the neighbors better than some others, it was arranged that prayer-meetings should be held in his house. These meetings were a great novelty in all that region, and excited a good deal of curiosity. Up to this time, Brother Whitcomb had never heard a Methodist sermon, or attended Methodist meeting, and like the most of his neighbors, he was strongly prejudiced against these novelties in doctrine and worship. Being a witness, however, to the zeal and piety of the young converts, he began to reflect whether after all they might not be correct, and he in an error.

At that period the line of demarkation between Calvinists and Arminians was more strongly drawn than at the present day. The middle wall or partition had not been taken down between the evangelical denominations. Indeed, Methodist preachers were looked upon in many places as interlopers, as intermeddlers with other men's matters, and especially with those of the staid New England clergy of the "standing order." Such things, however, have happily passed away in most sections of our common country, and Christians of different creeds have learned to respect and love each other, and more so as they become better acquainted with each other. And why should they not cultivate such acquaintance? During the late rebellion, and at an early stage of it, the Union forces lost many men by being fired upon by their own comrades, who mis-

took them for rebels—a catastrophe that might have been avoided had the different regiments been made acquainted with each other. So in the church of Jesus Christ—we need not only to unite our strength against the common foe, but we, in order to do it, need also to know each other.

To return from this digression: Although Brother Whitcomb had adopted the Calvinistic confession of faith as his épitome of belief, yet, when he became acquainted with the leading doctrines of Methodism, he began to doubt the truth of the opposing Calvinian theories. He had frequent and earnest conversations with his pastor, Mr. Haynes, on the subject, and the more he thought and questioned for light and instruction, the more firmly was he persuaded that he could not subscribe to the doctrines of John Calvin. To add to his disquietude of mind, his wife became deeply convicted of sin at one of the prayer-meetings before alluded to, and she soon after found the pearl of great price, in a love feast held in a wood house, at a quarterly meeting in the town of Pawlet, Vermont. His wife's happy conversion to God caused him to become more interested in the prayer-meetings held in his house, and lessened very materially his former prejudices against the Methodists, and as a matter of course increased his doubts about the truth of Calvinism.

Soon the Methodist circuit preachers were invited to visit the neighborhood, and they came with their Bible and hymn book and discipline in their pockets, while their saddle bags were well filled with "Fletcher's Checks," and other controversial works. On carefully perusing these works and listening to the exposition of scripture by the preachers, he saw that there existed a greater harmony between his own views and the ones now taught, than he had previously supposed.

In fact, he found himself a Methodist in belief almost before he was aware of it. Soon after, a class was formed in the neighborhood, with Brother Potter, before alluded to, as the leader. Brother Whitcomb, his wife, and a large num-

ber of the neighbors, joined the same. This occurred in October, 1827.* The transfer of his church relations, and especially the increased light he had received, was almost equivalent to a new conversion—to a spiritual resurrection. He now felt that he had something to do for the salvation of others, and in February following his admission to the church, he received license as an accredited exhorter, he being then in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

But our good brother could not satisfy his mind, nor ease his conscience, by giving an occasional public exhortation. He felt a “woe is me if I preach not the gospel,” and that it was his duty to give himself wholly to the work of preaching Christ and him crucified, as the author of a free and full salvation to fallen sinners everywhere. But he hesitated, he paused to consider whether it were really the voice of the spirit calling him to this work. He attempted to excuse himself on the ground of his limited educational attainments. His father, however, who had also been a member of the Congregational Church, but had left it and cast in his lot with the Methodists, being convinced that the Lord of the harvests had a work for his son to do, encouraged the latter and assisted him in attending the Academy in Poultney, Vermont, for a short time. Soon after leaving Poultney, he was induced, at the solicitation of the presiding elder, to supply for a few months a vacancy on Luzerne Circuit, in the Troy Conference. His first experience as an itinerant preacher was not very encouraging.

*It is stated by Rev. Benj. F. Brown, who was well acquainted with Brother Whitcomb in early life, that before Brother W. was converted, he was highly esteemed, but much more so after that event. When, therefore, he left his old friends, the Congregationalists, they felt they were losing a good and worthy member. At the meeting of the church where he withdrew, one of the good sisters, it is said, giving way to feelings of chagrin and disappointment, at the step he was taking, arose and quoted the passage of scripture: “They went out from us, because they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

Being peculiarly diffident and easily abashed, he was ever ready to retire into himself, and sink out of sight of others whenever anything like compliment was tendered to him. His natural or rather constitutional timidity, of which no one was more aware than himself, was a source of great trial to him all through life. On going to his field of labor, and reaching the place where he was to hold meeting that evening, he called at the house of a brother and modestly introduced himself to them as the man who was sent to supply the vacancy on the circuit. The good brother not noticing his embarrassment, but anxious to secure a congregation for the stranger, quickly turned to his little boy, and said: "Run, son, quick, to the school house, and tell them the *priest* has come, and there will be preaching to night!" To be called a priest was a little more than Brother Whitcomb had expected, and well nigh unmanned him.

His circuit was large and the people generally poor; he, however, labored hard for their spiritual benefit and filled out the remainder of the year with great acceptability to the people. He toiled hard for some six months, and all he received for his services during that time was less than ten dollars! Probably, however, if there was any fault attributable to either party, for the small pittance thus doled out, Brother W. might be entitled to a share of the blame, as his diffidence would not allow him to make known his wants, however urgent and pressing they might be.

At the close of his six months' labor on Luzerne Circuit began a mighty inward struggle in relation to his duty, and the course he should in future pursue. He heard the voice of God calling upon him to preach the gospel, and yet to him it appeared an impossibility—that he could not preach—that he had neither talent for, nor adaptation to the work. He was urged by his brothers, who knew him best, to give himself wholly to the work and to join the conference, but it occurred to him again, that his own inward convictions of duty might be merely the result of the expressed

opinions and exhortations of his too partial brothers, who took frequent opportunities to remind him of what they believed to be his duty. Finding little to comfort him among his friends and acquaintances, he resolved to leave the home of his childhood and youth, and go among comparative strangers, where he hoped to find relief from his painful convictions. He stated to his wife about this time, that if he could only get away from Brother Stratton—J. B. Stratton, the presiding elder—and Brother Brayton, the circuit preacher, and Brother Potter, his brother-in-law, he should feel more easy in his mind.

Accordingly, he entered into business relations with an uncle in Jefferson County, New York, and in the spring of 1827, removed to the neighborhood of Watertown. As it was with the prophet Jonah, attempting to flee from the presence of the Lord, so was it with Lewis Whitcomb; he found the same spirit, the same convictions of duty, in Jefferson as he had in Washington County. The expedient resorted to to hush the voice of conscience, did not succeed, for by day and by night he still felt the force of those hitherto ominous words: "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." He attempted again to excuse himself on the ground of his business relations and the responsibilities from which he could not free himself, and while hanging to this last prop, lo! reverses came, his uncle failed in business, and with his own property, was swept away all the hard earnings and precious savings of his nephew. By this failure, Brother Whitcomb lost everything he had, while it opened the way for his release from his former engagements, and left him without excuse.

In October, 1829, he received license to preach, by order of the quarterly conference of Carthage Circuit, and in July following, he was received on trial by the Oneida Annual Conference, at its session in Utica, (1830). He was appointed to Black River Circuit, in connection with the late Josiah Keyes, of precious memory. Black River Circuit in

those days differed very much from the same charge of that name of the present day. Then it embraced Lowville, Martinsburgh, Turin, Constableville, Leyden and Boonville. The labors of Brother Keyes were confined mostly to Lowville, thus leaving the rest of the charge under the supervision of Brother Whitcomb alone. But although unaided by his senior colleague, he went forth bearing precious seed, and his labor was not in vain in the Lord. At Turin, during the fall or winter, he was aided and cheered in his work by Rev. Squire Chase, then stationed in Canton, but who was detained at Turin, while passing through, by the sickness of his wife. In the latter part of the winter, a glorious revival of religion took place in Turin; a large number were happily and soundly converted to God, and it became necessary for Brother Whitcomb to receive assistance from some quarter, which was soon afforded by the appearance of Rev. George Sawyer, from Potsdam, then a young local preacher, but since, a prominent member of Black River Conference, who remained with him, and aided him in his work until the following session of conference, which was held in Lowville.

In 1831, Brother Whitcomb was appointed to Sandy Creek Circuit, without any colleague. Brother Sawyer, however, traveled with him a part of the year, and rendered him valuable assistance. Soon after beginning his labors here, a camp meeting was held on a part of the charge, at which a large number were brought to the knowledge of the truth. As on his former charge, so on this, his labors were not only abundant, but greatly blessed to the good of the people. Sandy Creek Circuit then embraced Mannsville, Ellisburgh, Belleville, Rodman and Lorraine, and wherever he went from town to town, he left a sanctified influence behind him. Thus, whatever might have been his previous doubts and fears in relation to his call to the ministry, God had given him many souls as seals of that call, and convinced him that he was occupying the position for which the Great Head of the church had designed him.

At the next conference, held in the village of Cazenovia, Brother Whitcomb, having passed a creditable examination, and having completed his two years of probation, was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon by the venerable Bishop Hedding. He was now appointed to Carthage Circuit, by which he had been recommended two years previously, as a proper person to join the traveling ministry. Included in that charge, at that period, were the towns of Champion, Copenhagen, Rutland, the present village and station of Carthage, besides a large extent of country on the borders of these places. Here again, he was without a colleague by the appointment of the bishop, but the presiding elder sent to his aid, Rev. Hubert Graves and Horace Rogers, the former having, since then, been long a member of the conference. Such was his acceptability among his old friends, that Brother Whitcomb was returned to this charge the second year, being favored with the assistance of Rev. Wilson Pennock, of Champion, an old and very useful local preacher, who lives long to bless the church. The first year of Brother Whitcomb's labors on Carthage Circuit passed pleasantly and prosperously. The second year was a year of power. One of the greatest revivals ever known in the Black River country was experienced; multitudes were converted and added to the church, and again were many seals given to his ministry.

The next session of the conference was in Auburn, (1834) and here Brother Whitcomb was ordained an elder by the same holy man who had, two years previously, set him apart to the office and work of a deacon—Bishop Hedding. His next appointment was LeRay Circuit, embracing LeRay, Evans Mills, Pamela and Orleans. Rev. D. W. Bristol was his colleague, and the estimate which that brother—now Doctor Bristol, and formerly chaplain in the army—formed of his senior colleague may be learned from the following letter, which appeared in the *Northern Christian Advocate* shortly after the death of Brother Whitcomb. It is dated "Fort Lyon, Virginia, February 15th, 1862."

“Rev. Lewis Whitcomb was our early colleague. Twenty-six years since, we traveled together the LeRay Circuit, then embracing the very ground where he ceased his labors. We were then young, inexperienced, and often thoughtless. He gave us a father's counsel, and dealt gently, and, as we believe, wisely, with us in relation to our errors. He gave us a home in his family, and treated us as a son. And though long years have gone, and many changes come since we have been permitted to see him, yet his kindness and gentleness, and the care to us of his most estimable family, have been cherished in our memory, and their names in our heart, with unabated affection and tenderness. Lewis Whitcomb was most emphatically a good man.”

Brother Whitcomb remained but one year on LeRay Circuit, when he was transferred to Pulaski and Mannsville Circuit, in connection with Rev. Earl B. Fuller as junior preacher. This was also a year of prosperity. At the next session of the conference, (Black River), held at Watertown, Pulaski and Mannsville were divided, the former becoming a station, and Brother Whitcomb appointed to it, where he spent a pleasant year, but could not be returned because of the constitutional limitation. He was next appointed to Ogdensburg station, where he labored two years. These latter were years of trial to him, occasioned mostly by the troubles in Canada. Indeed, no one but those who labored on the frontier during the Canada rebellion of 1837-8, can properly appreciate the exceedingly delicate position in which the clergy, and especially the Methodist clergy, along the border, found themselves involuntarily placed. A large number of revolutionists had risen in rebellion against both the home and provincial government. Among their watch-words was that of *liberty*, a word that produces a thrill of excitement in every American heart, and tends to produce sympathy with any people struggling with a superior power for the possession of that boon. Hence, whatever might have been the justice or injustice of the claim of the Canadian insurgents, the utterance of the talismanic word, “liberty,” found among many of the American people a speedy re-

sponse in the form of sympathy and material aid. People did not stop to reason or to inquire whether the Canadians were really oppressed by their governments; whether they were over-taxed or taxed at all; whether they enjoyed all the immunities of religious worship without fear or molestation; whether they were properly represented in their provincial parliament—these things were scarcely thought of. Liberty and independence were what they professedly sought after, and that was enough to awaken in the breasts of thousands on this side of the St. Lawrence river and the lakes a burning desire to aid the rebels, and in some way, affront the British lion, and subvert British rule on the continent of America. Not only in bar-rooms and shops and stores were Canadian politics freely discussed, but our very churches were made subservient to the wishes of the so-called patriots. Our church members in many instances, were fired with hatred for the British name, and time and money and influence were freely given to aid in the work of civil war, and to promote discord and destruction among neighbors on the other side of the line. The Methodist ministry had not learned that it was their duty to support or encourage civil war among their brethren in Canada, especially as the Methodists there were, almost to a man, loyal to the government. Why then, it was properly asked by ministers on this side, should I give my influence to a war of rapine and murder, in which my brethren in Christ will be the greatest sufferers? Why war against a people with whom we are at peace? Why attempt to force on a majority of that people, a form of government they do not want, and for which they evidently are not prepared? These were questions which every reasoning man had to settle for himself, whatever might be the bursts of mis-called patriotism around him, or the exhibition of mis-directed sympathy. Brother Whitcomb, than whom a truer American never lived, settled these questions in his own mind, so far as his own action was concerned, and the conclusion to which he wisely came, was to attend to his

own business, and let other people's alone. But could he do this without offending the "fire-eating" sympathizers? Scarcely. Yet favor or disfavor, honor or reproach, he maintained a dignified neutrality, except as he was free to express his private opinion that the civil war was unjustifiable. He was not alone in this opinion, the great body of the clergy coinciding with him in this respect.

Nevertheless, the commotion in the public mind, so near the scene of strife and bloodshed as were the people of his charge, had a disastrous influence on the cause of true piety and the prosperity of the church, so much so, as to render his stay with them much less pleasant and profitable than it otherwise would have been. Personally, he weathered the storm, and came off unhurt from amidst the breakers. At the close of his two years' labors in Ogdensburg, he was appointed, in 1839, to the charge of Potsdam District, which embraced all the territory now included in the Ogdensburg and Potsdam—or the present St. Lawrence District—with the exception of a few charges. As a presiding elder, he labored not only efficiently and successfully, but with great acceptability to both preachers and people. Acting constantly on the principle of the old maxim—"mind your own business,"—he attended strictly to all the duties of his responsible office, visiting his charges, holding quarterly meetings, camp meetings, etc., and both by precept and example setting forth the glories of religion, and the value of a meek and quiet spirit. He remained on Potsdam District three years, after which, in 1842, he was transferred to the charge of Watertown District. He selected Washingtonville as the place of his residence, where he remained until 1844, when the Adams district being formed, he was appointed to its charge, and removed his residence to the village of Adams. He remained but one year on Adams District, and was then re-appointed to Watertown District, fixing his residence at Evans Mills. On this district he remained the full term of four years, and every year was a year of prosperity to the

church—churches and members being multiplied through his labors and those of the preachers under his jurisdiction.

At the conference of 1849, he was appointed to Mexico station, where he labored with much success, and where he is not only remembered, but revered by the people. He remained at Mexico two years, and during the winter of 1849–50, he, with his people, enjoyed a gracious outpouring of the spirit of God. The revival began at a meeting on watch night, and a series of meetings being held, they resulted in permanent benefit to the church. He was assisted mostly, in this series of meetings, by Brother Trakey, an influential local preacher, residing at Fort Brewerton. During the second year of Brother Whitcomb's pastorate at Mexicoville, the society suffered a heavy loss in the destruction of their large church edifice by fire. As the parsonage was near the church, and was in danger of being consumed, Brother Whitcomb exerted himself so much to save the one, and then the other, that he sustained injuries from which he never fully recovered. He addressed himself immediately to the work of procuring means for the erection of a new church edifice, laboring indefatigably until the next session of the conference, previous to which, he had the pleasure of seeing a new building raised and partially enclosed. From Mexico, he was appointed, in 1851, to Van Buren Circuit, where he served the people two years, and during which period the church was blessed with revival power and influence. His next appointment was Wolcott, in Wayne County. Here he met with some severe trials of his faith and patience, but was successful, notwithstanding all the serious difficulties under which the church was laboring, and remained two years. 1855, he was sent to Cato Circuit, where he remained one year only, on account of impaired health. The region of country, where he had been laboring for the three years past, having a climate unsuited to bilious constitutions, Brother Whitcomb, as many others have done, felt the effects of the same in his own person. At Wolcott, he had

several slight attacks of bilious fever, and in Cato, being in the vicinity of the Seneca river, which is noted for its effects on a bilious system, he had a severe attack of fever. As this occurred toward the close of the conference year, although the conference held its session in Syracuse, but a short distance from his charge, he was unable to be present. Indeed, during the conference Sabbath, he was thought by his physician to be dying, but in answer to many prayers, the Lord prolonged his days.

The conference gave him a superannuated relation, not knowing but the Head of the Church would take Brother Whitcomb's appointment into his own hands, and transfer him to the church of the first-born in heaven. He was taken sick on the 26th May, and on the 2d of July had so far recovered, as to think himself able to attempt a journey to the East, that he might visit once more the friends and scenes of his youth. He succeeded in getting as far east as the village of Rome, where he was obliged to discontinue his journey. He suffered a relapse, and came very near death. Recovering, however, after a tedious detention, he changed his course, succeeded in reaching Watertown, and soon after went to visit his daughter in Peterboro, Canada West, where he remained, recuperating his wasted energies, during the year. The next conference was held in Potsdam. Although still in feeble health, such was Brother Whitcomb's anxiety to engage in the work to which he had devoted his life, and such his intense desire to be found side by side with his brethren of the conference, doing battle for the Lord, that he left his friends in Canada with the intention of taking an effective relation; but on the way he took a severe cold which deprived him of the use of his voice and consequently rendered him wholly unable to preach, and with a sad heart he found himself at the close of conference still a superannuate. As the warm weather came on he partially regained his voice, and his health in other respects also improving, he found himself able in the middle of the

summer to go to Florence mission and supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Rev. William H. Blanchard.

His health still continuing to improve, he was made effective at the conference held in Jordan, in 1858, and was appointed to a light field of labor, Salmon River Circuit. Here he remained one year, when he was appointed to Vienna, another light charge, and at the next conference, he was sent to Somerville and Sprague's Corners, a small charge in the Ogdensburg District. Here he found some church difficulties existing, but he yielded not to any undue pressure, but calmly pursued the even tenor of his way. Here he remained but a single year. On each of the last named charges, where he remained but one year, his removal was a source of regret to the people whom he served, but as his health remained poor, it was his own choice to be removed.

From the Somerville and Sprague's Corners Circuit, he was appointed to Pamela Four Corners in Jefferson County. This proved to be his last appointment, for before another conference session, he had exchanged grace for glory; the church militant for the church triumphant. He was received on the charge with great cordiality, where many years before he had served them as a young Methodist preacher, and later in life as a much esteemed presiding elder. He entered upon his labors with his usual zeal and fidelity, and continued to discharge all the duties of a Methodist preacher until a short period before his death, which occurred on the 17th day of December, 1861.

The account of his last illness and death is so correctly given by his old friend and fellow laborer, Rev. Gardner Baker, who was his presiding elder at the time of his decease, that we will give it from his pen:

"It is somewhat difficult to determine what was the immediate cause of his death. Some two or three weeks before he died, a sore appeared on the back of his head, near the neck, in appearance like the commencement of a boil. As it increased, it assumed a carbuncular form. His general health, which for some time had been impaired, now

failed rapidly. Still no serious apprehensions were entertained. He continued to discharge the duties of his station as usual. The swelling continuing to increase, he consulted a physician, who pronounced it to be of an erysipelas nature, and thought on the recovery of his health in other respects, it would disappear. On Sunday, December 15th, two days before his death, he filled his appointments as usual. He preached in the morning at the village, rode five miles and preached in the afternoon, and returned to the village prayer-meeting in the evening. On returning to the parsonage from prayer-meeting, he complained of feeling more unwell, and in a short time his sufferings became intense. That long night his wife—herself an invalid and nearly blind—spent alone with her suffering husband, doing all in her power for his relief. In the night, his mind began to wander. In the morning, a physician was called, who gave his opinion that the patient was attacked with typhoid fever, and that there was nothing especially alarming in his symptoms. The usual remedies were administered, but all to no effect. The violence of the disease rapidly increased until Tuesday evening, when the wheels of life stood still. How far the eruption on his head contributed to the melancholy result, affords matter for a difference of opinion. Whether congestion of the brain, caused by the local inflammation, or strangulation, produced by an inward rupture of the swelling, had anything to do with hastening the catastrophe, is not now of much importance. The agony was sharp but short, and our dear brother ‘has ceased at once to work and live.’

“The violence of the malady, and the early and almost constant delirium which accompanied it, precluded much religious conversation, but during the few lucid intervals, his communications were of the most satisfactory nature. While delirious, his mind was almost constantly engaged upon religious subjects. Preaching, praying and exhorting indicated the direction in which his thoughts had been employed for so many years. Thus the ruling passion was strong in death. Our brother had not left the work of preparation for eternity to be performed on a death-bed. His whole life had been spent in view of this hour, and none who knew him can doubt his readiness to meet it.

“Brother Whitcomb was a man of unquestionable piety, and devotion to his work. Of this, no one could be long

in his presence without being deeply convinced. In his social intercourse, seriousness and cheerfulness were happily blended. When in company with his friends (he had no enemies,) he knew how to converse with freedom, without approaching rudeness, or losing sight, for a moment, of what was due to himself, and the Master in whose service he was employed. He was a man of uncommon evenness and sweetness of temper. The writer of this has been much in his company. has been associated with him in the toils of the ministry, and the perplexing responsibilities of the bishop's cabinet, and he cannot call to remembrance a single instance in which Brother Whitcomb betrayed, by word, look, or action, the smallest degree of anger or petulance, or any departure from the uniform placidity of temper for which he was distinguished.

"As the head of a family, he was the idol of his household. He has left a wife and two married daughters. To realize how deeply they feel their loss, one must sit in the midst of the weeping circle, as the writer has done, and listen to the gush of affectionate remembrances, and witness the tears that seem never to cease to flow.

"As a preacher, Brother Whitcomb belonged to a class who have fewer annoyances, and perhaps more comforts, than most others. He was never sought after, and demanded, as if the salvation of the world depended on the securing of his services for a particular church, nor was he ever rejected, or treated coolly, by the people to whom he was sent, as if the mortal sin committed by the bishop must be visited on his head. As a true man, a loyal Methodist minister, he accepted his appointments cheerfully, and never failed to secure the affectionate confidence and respect of his people.

"In the pulpit, he was impressively solemn. His address was simple, affectionate and grave, neither soaring to a false sublime, nor sinking to a low familiarity. His sermons were methodically arranged; so plain, a child could understand them, so serious the most fastidious could find no room to cavil, and so spiritual the most pious of his hearers were always provided with the bread of life. It did not satisfy him that his flock were taught what is true in doctrine, and right in practice, so long as the heart was unmoved. He felt that but little real progress was made while his hearers remained impenitent, however attentive they might be to his ministry.

“In the death of Brother Whitcomb, the church mourns the loss of a good man, a true friend, and a faithful minister.

G. BAKER.”

We may add to the above, that Brother Whitcomb continued to retain until his death the same retiring modesty—almost timidity, which characterized him in early life. We have often wondered how a man so naturally diffident should succeed in occupying so public a position as he did during a great portion of his ministry, and it is only accounted for by the discovery, on the part of his brethren, of the sterling qualities of the man. He was no office-seeker, yet he was entrusted by the bishops and the conference, year after year, with the responsibilities of the presiding eldership, and how well and how faithfully he discharged the duties of that office, his younger brethren who looked up to him as a father, very well know. His advice on being asked on points of church discipline was always kindly and freely given, but given understandingly and after due reflection, and when once given, if in accordance with the same, there might be raised “a tempest in a tea pot” on the part of some, Brother Whitcomb was not the man to shrink from responsibility, and cast the blame on the administrator. His preachers always had the utmost confidence in his judgement, and the firmest reliance upon his friendship, and if in any trouble, they knew where to look for counsel and assistance. A truer friend never lived than Lewis Whitcomb.

In physical proportion he was rather below the average standard of height, but he was well built, had a mild dark eye, his complexion was rather dark, and to a stranger he would appear as a well to do, well informed gentleman.

Brother Whitcomb's education was respectable, notwithstanding his disadvantages in early life. He was a great reader, especially of theological works. While his style in the pulpit was chaste and vigorous, his grammar and rhetoric

faultless, he brought before his hearers things new and old, and proved himself a master-workman in all that appertained to the doctrines, precepts and institutions of Christianity. While there was nothing dazzling, or what some would call splendid, about his preaching, he always fed his hearers with strong meat, and if his sermons by the mass of his hearers would not be pronounced great, all would readily acknowledge that they were good; and as it was in sermonizing, so in everything else. He was a good man in every respect, and worthy of a far better record than our feeble pen is able to give him. He left a disconsolate widow and several children grown up to maturity and well settled in life, who mourn their loss with sincere and unfeigned sorrow, while he peacefully "rests from his labors and his works follow him."

CHAPTER XVI.

REV. EDMUND E. E. BRAGDON, D. D.

EDMUND ERASTUS EASTMAN BRAGDON was born in the town of Sharpley, now Acton, York County, State of Maine, December 1st, 1812. He was the youngest of six surviving brothers, several of his father's children having died while young. The names given him were designed to commemorate the virtues, and perpetuate the memory of Rev. E. E. Eastman, pastor of the Congregational Church, of which church Mrs. Bragdon was a member, and who, on the same day that she was permitted to rejoice that "a man child was born" into the world, was also called to mourn the departure to the spirit world of her pastor and spiritual guide. No doubt she desired the mantle of the man of God to fall on the shoulders of her new born babe.

When Edmund was six years of age, his father with the family removed to the town of Richland, Oswego County, New York, where for ten years the subject of this sketch was in no wise distinguished among his young-mates for ability, except that he possessed such a serious and retiring disposition as to render him at times a subject of wonder, and frequently of ridicule, to his play-fellows. In the year 1828, at the age of sixteen, he went to Sandy Creek, in the same county, to learn the trade of a tanner. Here he remained on a five years' apprenticeship, until he attained the age of twenty-one, and as might be expected, became a proficient in the art to which he had devoted himself. Having completed his apprenticeship, he became a journeyman, but scarcely had a month passed away, than by one of those sudden fluctuations in business, which frequently happen to men in commercial and manufacturing life, he was thrown out of employment, and found it impossible to secure any. He had, however, thirty dollars in his pocket—the earnings of that single month—and the question suggested itself to his mind, whether he had not better spend that sum in attending school and acquiring an increase of learning. His brother, Charles P., was then a student in the Oneida Conference Seminary, at Cazenovia, and while Edmund was debating the subject in his own mind, his brother Lindsey took occasion to speak to him frankly and freely about the interests of his soul. Edmund, although hitherto a stranger to the power of saving grace upon his own heart, had not been ignorant of its influence upon the hearts and lives of others. Indeed; his intellect, his judgment, his better nature had embraced Christianity as a theory for many years, but he had never sworn allegiance to the King of kings, nor yielded himself up as a servant of God. The above conversation however, touched a chord in his heart, that vibrated in unison with the heart of Christ when he said so sweetly and so tenderly, "Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Edmund's heart

was melted into tenderness, he wept freely, confessed his sins, and avowed his need of a Saviour. Knowing that God had showered upon the seminary above mentioned "the healthful spirit of his grace," and having dreamed a short time previously that he had gone to school and became happily converted, and no doubt believing that becoming a student there would aid him in the work of securing salvation, as it had done in the cases of scores of other young men, he fully resolved to go, with the purpose, not only of seeking the knowledge that cometh from man, but the wisdom that cometh from God.

This wise resolution proved the beginning of a new and higher life to our young friend. He entered his name as a student at the seminary, then under the care of Professor Larrabee, the principal, and shortly afterward his name was entered by the recording angel in the "Lamb's book of life." Young Bragdon had become a Christian! His heart was now filled with love to God and love to man.

"Love! What a volume in a word!
An ocean in a tear!
A seventh heaven in a glance!
The lightning in a touch!
A millenium in a moment!"

This happy change occurred, if we mistake not, in the year 1833, and from that period until the close of his eventful and useful life, his pathway tended toward the gate of the upper sanctuary.

After attending the seminary at Cazenovia, for some time, and diligently improving his advantages, his kind preceptor received a call from, and was appointed principal of the Maine Wesleyan Seminary. Having formed an attachment for young Bragdon, he proposed to the latter to drive his team to his eastern home, an offer which was readily accepted. After reaching their new home, young Bragdon became a member of Professor Larrabee's family, working occasionally about the house and seminary building, and receiving

in return his board and tuition. Thus for a series of years did our student apply himself to the acquirement of knowledge, teaching school each winter, until the year 1839, when he became so far advanced in his preparatory studies that he was admitted as a sophomore in the Wesleyan University, at Middleton, Connecticut. Here he remained one year, doing honor to himself by his close application to study, but at the close of the sophomore year, finding his finances in such a low state as to render it inconvenient, if not impossible, to continue the course without interruption, he was compelled to leave the institution for a time that he might recruit his scanty means by teaching. He accordingly accepted a situation as teacher in the Amenia Seminary, in Dutchess County, New York. Here, first as teacher of the English branches, and then as classical teacher, he spent a year, meanwhile pursuing his collegiate studies with so much diligence and success that when at its close he presented himself again at college, and passed the usual examination, he was permitted to enter the senior class and to pursue his studies therein. At the close of his senior year, he passed a most satisfactory examination, but without waiting to receive his degree of Bachelor of Arts, he hastened off to begin the arduous duty of teacher in the Mexicoville Academy, Oswego County, New York. Shortly afterward, at the commencement of the university in 1841, his degree was duly bestowed—a well-earned tribute to his industry and perseverance.

He remained as teacher in the academy at Mexicoville for two terms, when he was chosen principal of the academy at Fulton, in the same county. This institution had formerly been under the patronage of the Presbyterian Church, but not meeting with all the success that was desirable, it was proposed to change its denominational *status*, and transfer it to the patronage of the Methodist Church, which change took place in 1842, just prior to the time when Brother Bragdon took charge of the school. Before entering upon his

duties, however, as principal, he united himself in marriage with Miss Eliza Barnum, with whom he first formed an acquaintance at the *Amenia Seminary*. His choice of a partner for life was dictated not only by affection but by sound discretion, the lady being every way well qualified, both by nature and grace, to become the wife of one who was entering upon a career of usefulness, and who was destined to become a leading man in the cause of education. Having thus settled one of the important questions of life, he began his labors in the *Fulton Academy*, and applied himself with his usual diligence and assiduity to the discharge of his important duties. His constant application to study, and his well known industry as a teacher, together with the confinement inseparable from the life of a teacher, made inroads upon a naturally frail constitution, and prompted him, at the end of two years, to change his relation to the *Fulton Academy*, and to seek for a field of usefulness elsewhere.

Brother Bragdon, soon after his conversion, had his mind directed to the subject of preaching the gospel. His fellow students, as also Professor Larrabee, thought it was his duty to prepare himself for the work of the ministry, and he was solicited to accept a license to exhort or preach; but he was not fully convinced that God had called him to the work, so he modestly refused the offer. While in *Maine*, the matter was again pressed upon his attention, but again he felt it his duty to refuse all offers of the kind; and while at the university, his friends endeavored to prevail upon him to preach the gospel, but all advice of this kind, while he appreciated the motives of those who kindly gave it, had but little effect, for the time being, in shaking his purpose to devote himself to the cause of education, for thus far he had not felt in his own heart, the "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." At length, he resolved to yield to the opinion of such men as Larrabee and Dr. Wilbur Fisk and Dr. D. W. Clarke, and accept of a license, not, however, with the design so much

of giving himself wholly to the work of the ministry, as to gratify the wishes of friends, and perhaps open up the way for more extended usefulness as an instructor. While at Amenia, he received license to preach, and whatever may have been his feelings in regard to his duty, there is no doubt that God owned and blessed his labors in the pulpit, as well as in the teacher's desk, as he will the labors of any sincere honest-hearted disciple, who tries to do good, whether as a preacher or a layman.

Our first personal knowledge of him as a preacher dates from the period of his joining the Black River Conference as a probationer, in the year 1842. His recommendation was given by the Fulton Quarterly Conference, and is signed by Anson Fuller, presiding elder, and dated May 7th, 1842. At the time of his admission on trial, he was twenty-eight years of age, and during his two years' probation, he was regularly appointed by the bishop to the charge of Fulton Academy. At the expiration of his term of probation, having passed the ordeal of examination in conference studies, to which all applicants for admission must subject themselves, be they collegiates or otherwise, and having satisfied the conference of his fitness for the office and work of the ministry, he was duly received into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Leonidas L. Hamlin, at Potsdam, N. Y., August 4th, 1844. As before stated, on account of ill health, he was obliged to relinquish his favorite employment of teaching, and to seek for a field of usefulness in some other department of the church. He was accordingly appointed to the regular pastorate, and was stationed in Wolcott, Wayne County, N. Y., to which place he was returned the following year. As a pastor, his labors were greatly blessed to the people whom he served, and during his stay among them, a gracious revival of religion was experienced on the charge, and some precious souls were added to the church. His name is remembered with gratitude by many of the good people of Wolcott at the present time.

But however pleasant to him might be the duties of the pastorate, and however useful in that particular field of labor, he felt continually that his more appropriate sphere of action was that of a Christian educator. Hence, his health having somewhat improved, and having received a call to take charge of the Mexico Academy, he accepted the call with the expectation that the institution would become the property of the conference. He was accordingly appointed principal of that academy by Bishop Janes, in 1846. As his expectations were not realized in the above respect, he felt it his duty to resign his position as principal, and at the next session of the conference, in 1847, he returned to the regular work of the ministry, and was appointed to the charge of the church in the city of Syracuse. But while here, and while discharging his duties as a Christian pastor, with all due fidelity, his mind seemed to be constantly occupied with designs to advance the cause of education in the church, of which he was a member and minister. To this work he seemed to have a special call, and to this he felt it his duty to bend all the energies of his soul. Having been for some time at the head of the Fulton Academy, and feeling a great desire that this institution should flourish, he entered into a correspondence with the trustees and others for the purpose of placing the institution on a more permanent basis, and measures were soon originated, whereby the object was secured. Large donations were made by residents and others, and a very liberal sum, given by a wealthy and generous widow lady of Fulton—Mrs. Falley—secured to the school; a new name—"Falley Seminary"—was adopted, by which name it has ever since been known. The institution was also fully placed under the patronage and supervision of the Black River Conference, by which it was controlled until it passed into the hands of the former able principal, John P. Griffin, now of Syracuse, under whose able management it flourished for many years, retaining the patronage of the church.

At the session of the conference in 1848, Brother Bragdon was re-appointed principal of the Fulton Academy, or Falley Seminary, as it was called, and for the ensuing six years, filled that post with distinguished honor to himself and the church he represented. We should have mentioned in its proper place that two years previously to his appointment to Falley Seminary, he was regularly set apart to the full orders of the ministry, as an elder, by Bishop Janes, at the conference held at Lowville, in 1846; and although daily engaged in his arduous duties as teacher and manager of so large and flourishing an institution, he frequently filled the sacred desk, not only in the village of Fulton, but in neighboring villages and country places. By his frequent exposures in meeting the many demands made upon him by his brethren for pulpit labor, it is thought he laid the foundation of that disease which terminated in his premature death, and consequent loss to the church. On a certain watch-night occasion, he went out some eight miles from the village to preach, and the good brethren, forgetting that he came to them wearied and prostrated by his duties as a teacher, extorted from him a second sermon. This proved too much for his enfeebled system. His throat and lungs being in an exceedingly irritable state, as he left the warm church and went into the chilling atmosphere without, he contracted a severe cold, which brought on a cough, that never fully left him. His health at length became so poor that a change of climate was supposed to be absolutely necessary for his comfort if not his existence. He accordingly left the institution at Fulton, and proceeding to visit some friends in the city of New York, in the spring of 1853, he was earnestly solicited by leading members of the New York Conference to become a member of that body. Accordingly, at the session of that conference held in Kingston, May 4th, Brother Bragdon was regularly transferred by Bishop Simpson, and appointed to the charge of Vestry Street Church in the city of New York, one of the

principal churches in that city. He immediately entered upon the duties of his new charge, but had remained but a few months when information came to him that he had been elected professor of ancient languages in the Ohio State University. The position and the climate both seemed inviting, and so, bidding a kind adieu to his many friends and parishioners in New York city, he left them for his new field of labor, where he was warmly greeted by the beloved and honored president, Dr. Edward Thompson, and other members of the faculty.

Spending a single year in the chair of ancient languages at the above institution, he accepted a similar position in the Indiana Asbury University—a Methodist college located at Greencastle, Indiana. The change thus made was in accordance with his own wishes and feelings. The Ohio University, while a noble institution and doing a good work in the cause of Methodistic education, and while honored with such names among its faculty as Thompson and Harris, who with their colleagues extended to Brother Bragdon the most welcome greetings, and hailed him as an esteemed fellow laborer, yet, after discharging his duties in that college for a year, he believed he might be more useful in another field of labor, and having received the notice of his election to a professorship in the before mentioned university as the call of God, he went to Greencastle, where for four years he dignified his office and left the impress of his giant mind upon the hearts of hundreds of young men, the greater portion of whom still survive to cherish his memory, and follow his pious counsel and instructions.

After having spent four pleasant years at Greencastle, he accepted a professorship in the newly endowed Genesee college, at Lima, Livingston County, New York, of which Doctor John Morrison Reid was the honored president, and where he finished his labors and his life.

As before stated, when Brother Bragdon left Falley Seminary, in 1853, and became pastor of a church in the city

of New York, his membership was transferred to the New York Conference. When he went to Ohio, his name was attached to the roll of the Ohio Conference, and while connected with the Greencastle institution, he was a member of the North Indiana Conference. Now on his return to the vicinity of his *own* conference, he gladly assented to have his name recorded among those of his former brethren in the Black River Conference, from whom he had been separated for five years, but who had not forgotten his name or merits, and by whom he was welcomed back with all that cordiality and warmth of brotherly affection which had characterized their former intercourse with him. Accordingly, in 1858, the name of E. E. E. Bragdon—so often heard in former years at our annual conventions—was again called and responded to, and again we find that revered name on the list of conference committees, and especially the committee on education.

From this period until the time of his decease, Brother Bragdon was one among us, at Lima, discharging his duties to his pupils as a Christian teacher and minister, and at the sessions of our conference, evincing all that interest in the welfare of our beloved Zion which might be expected of one who had laid all upon her altars. Neither was it in the ordinary routine of class recitations or conference business that our brother sought to render himself useful. His enlarged mind grasped after great things, and although by no means an aspiring man, he was ever on the alert to bring about some good thing, even though it might be accomplished by humble instrumentalities. He had long been of the opinion that a Methodist Historical Society in Central and Western New York would conduce to the advancement of the cause of literature and education, hence, at the Black River Conference of 1860, he presented the following resolution which was adopted :

“Resolved, That P. D. Gorrie be appointed a committee to correspond with members of other conferences on the

subject of forming a Methodist Historical Society in Central and Western New York.

E. E. E. BRAGDON."

For a variety of reasons, the duties devolving on this committee have not been discharged with that degree of fidelity that the importance of the subject demands, nor has the limited correspondence between the committee and others led to any well defined principle of action nor given birth to any practical mode of operation, whereby such an organization may be effected, and its benefits diffused among the people, nevertheless the subject is worthy of our attention as ministers and members, and a society of that character well sustained would be productive of lasting good to the church.*

During the time of Brother Bragdon's stay at Lima, his health, which had become immeasurably improved by his residence in the west, began again to decline and give way under the rigors of our more northern climate, until at length, on the 20th day of March, 1862, he peacefully breathed his last, at his own home in the village of Lima, New York, aged fifty years, leaving a devoted widow and several children to lament his decease, and weep over their own sorrows, with which "a stranger may not intermeddle."

In dwelling upon the character of our dear departed brother, in addition to what we shall present from the pen and lips of another, we may be allowed to say that Doctor Bragdon was a pious, devoted Christian man. His conversion was genuine, his life and conversation after his conversion being such as become a follower of Jesus Christ. He was a steadfast friend of the church of his choice, and labored for over twenty years to subserve her interests and promote

*It is proper to state in this connection that since the foregoing was written, a "Historical Society" has been organized in the Northern New York Conference, formerly the Black River, of which Rev. Dr. I. S. Bingham is the president, and Rev. J. C. Darling, corresponding secretary.

her prosperity, educationally and otherwise. As a member of the Black River Conference, he was warmly attached to his brethren, as they all were to him, and it is worthy of remark, that although a man of superior intellectual attainments, and in many respects a giant when compared with some of his brethren, he never manifested any degree of superiority in his intercourse with them, nor sought to be elevated above them. He was distinguished for his modesty and retiring disposition, and perhaps no member of the conference can remember an instance wherein the subject of this sketch evinced any desire to be considered better than the most humble and least educated of his brethren in the ministry. His funeral sermon was preached in Lima, March 23d, by Dr. Reid, president of the college, and at the next session of the Black River Conference, on the morning of April 25th, 1862, in connection with other appropriate services in relation to the death of two other members within the former year, Rev. John W. Armstrong, A. M., long the friend of Brother Bragdon, and like him for many years a teacher in our seminaries of learning, pronounced a short, but able eulogy.

We shall avail ourselves of a further sketch of the life and character of Dr. Bragdon, and especially of the closing scenes of his life, as given in the published sermon of Dr. Reid, from which we have gleaned many important facts in the sketch thus far, and the language of which we have in a few instances transferred to these pages. As we have not room for the entire sermon, we shall present only such extracts as relates more particularly to the character and death of our brother. The text selected for the occasion was the following :

“ And they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death.”—2 Chron. xxx: 33.

“ Death is a relentless foe ; there is no beauty that he will not mar, no bliss that he will not invade, no position that he will not despoil, no talents that he will not prostrate. Rags and

royalty are alike to him, as with indiscriminate sickle he cuts his dreadful way. He spares neither the monarch on his throne nor the scholar at his studies. There, in our text, lies a king disrobed of his jewels and laid in his sepulchre, and here before us is all that remains on earth of an earnest Christian, an eminent scholar and an eloquent divine.

“The world is full of deaths. They are so common as to make no more impression upon our stupefied souls than the extinguishment of a lamp, or the fall of a leaf. But there are deaths so distinguished, either by their circumstances or the rank of the victim, that it would seem they must be influential. In the case of the late honored president of our incorporation, death was swifter than the lightning, for before the telegraph could tell us of his dying, he was dead. It was fearfully sudden, and strange it is indeed if the warning were unfelt.

“Again we mourn. In this instance death has come slowly, like a beast of prey making certain of his victim, but so prominent was our brother in the public eye, so beloved by us all, that his death has in it more than the ordinary lesson. The very noise of a fall from so great a height must at least attract attention, and awaken, if but for a moment, the thought that ‘man at his very best estate is altogether vanity.’ Could a star drop from the sky, or the sun fade in its noontide splendor, and the world not heed it? Could some fountain at our door, that had for years gushed up in delicious coolness to quench our thirst, cease to yield its waters, or some tree in our garden that had long blossomed in sweetest fragrance, and borne its lucious plenty, refuse its odors and fruits, and we be indifferent? Could the sweet warblings with which some favorite songster had long filled our dwellings be suddenly hushed, and the heart be altogether listless? It could not be. Well then, within that coffin there is a wasted form that lately went about to bless you, that eye dim in death gave you the look of love and was filled with tears for you, those heavy ears listened patiently to your tale burdened with grief, those poor dumb lips were often moved to plead with you for God or with God for you. Yet, he is dead! As a star he cheered the gloom of your night, as a sun he flooded you with day; he was more than fountain or fruit tree, and his words as the sweetest song. Strange would it be if in all this vast assem-

bly there were a single heart so obdurate as to be unimpressed at beholding him, silent and shrouded in death."

After asking the important question: "Can we solve the mystery that so often enshrouds the removal from earth of those eminent for ability, virtue and usefulness?" and proceeding to show that there is a mystery in these dyings, instancing the case of King Hezekiah as in point, the Doctor proceeds:

"Who among us might not have been more easily spared than our brother? His now widow and these babes, unconscious of the magnitude of their loss, seemed to plead loudly for his continued stay. What more useful? We who beheld the purity of his life, we who received the precious words that dropped from his lips, have prayed earnestly that he might abide with us. These youth who gathered about him as a fountain of classic lore and beauty could scarcely consent to his departure, yet he is gone. Again and again, I have heard among you words of surprise that death should be allowed to hide so bright a jewel, but you perceive that our bereavement has had its parallel in almost every hour of human history, and men are everywhere saying, with the poet Moore,

"Great God! how could thy vengeance light
So bitterly on one so bright;
How could the hand that gave such charms,
Blast them again?"

After expatiating at some length on the object and value of human life, he proceeds to disclose "*the true secret of an honorable life and lamented death*," and shows conclusively that it is not in ability or genius alone that the secret is to be found, but in good natural talents, refined by intellectual training and sanctified by the grace of God, and then adds:

"Had all the varied attainments of our beloved Dr. Bragdon been associated with impurity in his character, no such precious memories would be now clustering around his brow, and the tender tears of a bereaved community would not bedew his verdant grave. Virtue is the basis of all true honor, it is the staple from which the coveted fabric of an honorable life must be formed. Other things may be interwoven with it, but warp and woof must be genuine goodness."

Having elucidated the subject of his text with great clearness and perspicuity, the preacher applies his subject to the case of his departed friend, and alludes to the closing scenes of his mortal life :

“ I have not spoken, as you perceive, of *triumph* of soul in a dying hour, but of the regrets and tears that shall wreath your coffin, and of the monument of love that will rear itself upon your grave, if you be good as well as great, and to this alone my text led me. It speaks only of a valuable life profoundly regretted in its close. Triumph in the last hour may be vouchsafed to a life of infamy that may, perchance, have terminated in true repentance and a salvation ‘as by fire.’ When the soul, horror stricken at the nearness of its ruin, stands just within the crater, and the lurid glare of divine wrath gleams through the night of its guilt, and the earth burns and trembles as it descends, when such a soul, lifting up its last despairing cry for help, finds a power merciful though majestic, invisible though infinite, suddenly interposed to deliver, then the contrast is as vivid as if hell were changed to heaven, and the joy of such a soul may far exceed that of one whose life was distinguished for its excellence. It is simply noonday bursting in upon midnight ; it is perfect rest after the agony of travail ; it is serenest sunshine covering a sky that a moment before frowned and thundered with the blackest storm. Therefore the joy of a last hour, sometimes at least, is proportioned to the guilt rather than the excellence of the life.

“ Dr. Bragdon can scarcely be said to have had a joyous sickness or an exultant death ; it was sometimes, I might say often so, and yet in this respect may not compare with some who were unworthy to tie his shoes ; but what of that, he lived not for a dying hour, but for eternity. If at first his spiritual foes were fierce and unrelenting, and if even when victory came, much that remained of his sickness was disturbed by frequent conflicts, so that of necessity the loudest shout of triumph had to be deferred until the struggle was ended, yet who can doubt his completest triumph ? Oh ! had we spiritual ears, we could now hear his hallelujahs among the redeemed, swelling all the higher for the tribulations, or as the word literally means, the threshings of his last sickness. But hear for a moment some of his beholdings of the ‘excellent glory.’ Once, as I wore away

the night watches with him, spasm succeeded spasm, with alarming frequency, attended with unconsciousness, and for aught we knew, the pale horse and rider had come. At the return of consciousness he would say, 'Oh! Jesus is my Saviour. I thought I was in heaven.' Once his wife said to him, 'And how did it seem dear?' 'All bliss,' he replied, 'all bliss, and no coughs there.' Can it be doubted that these were distant glimpses of the heavenly city and the palace of God, caught by his soul as it neared the boundaries of the invisible? And these were by no means so occasional as might be inferred. Weeks ago, as a certain Sabbath dawned, he believed it would be his last one. As I came into his room, he turned his eye to the bright beaming sun and said, 'What a beautiful day to die on.' On another Sabbath, as I inquired of his soul, he replied, 'This is the happiest day of my life.' He once bade me tell the students that he had conflicts, but he had triumphs also. Even after his deliverance from that terrible season of darkness that settled upon his earlier sickness, there were occasional clouds flitting strangely across his spiritual horizon. My own opinion is, that for the most part these were mental aberrations, for when they had passed and the sufferer was completely himself, he had the firmest trust in his Saviour. It was associated, indeed, with the most humbling view of himself, but was yet clear, strong and evangelical. At one of these lucid intervals he said to Professor Lattimore in a passage of such beauty and pathos as sometimes enriched his sermons, 'I now recognize in Jesus the Jehovah of the Old Testament. He is the wonderful, the counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. He is the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, my fortress, my strong tower, my deliverer. He is to me the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He is the Emanuel, the Son of God, the Son of man, the word, the wisdom and the way. He is life and truth itself.' Such were the hours when his mind was completely itself, and to me his death is altogether satisfactory, but his life was more so; and give me the testimony of a holy life in preference to any scintillations at a dying moment.

"After all, may we not attach too much consequence to the moment of dying? The tremendous issues that are forever settled in the second of time that terminates probation, must always invest it with a solemn interest, but it is,

after all, as nothing, compared with the life before it and the eternity after it. In itself it is a figment ; no man can find it. It is not just before death, for the man still lives ; it is not just after death, for then he is dead. What moment then is the moment of death ? When probation ends, eternity begins ; the cessation of the one is the commencement of the other. Life is a steady, onward progress to the grave, the rate no faster an hour before our dissolution, than in the hey-day of life. Why, then, so much of a dying moment ? *Life* it is that is pregnant with eternal destiny. Had a life so eminent for its excellence as Dr. Bragdon's been closed without a *single expression* of joy and exultation, my faith, that to him death was without its struggle and the grave without a victory, would have remained unshaken. Precious, however, will be the many beautiful words of trust and hope that fell from his lips, and sweet will be even many of the *wanderings* of his intellect. It seemed to stray away into the sunny places where it now revels. Once, referring to his brother deceased about a year ago, and to two infants that lie in the graveyard at Fulton, he said, 'Oh !' I have been having a great time with Charles to-day. He has taken me all over heaven, and shown it to me, and I have seen the little ones, and have had them both in my arms ; Charles is a great angel there.' A few hours before he died, he seemed to be trying to find the word sin in some imagined lesson before him, fancying if he could only find it, he could go to sleep. I at last said to him, 'Well, isn't it there ?—Don't you see it ?' 'Yes,' said he, 'but is it hopeful to the Christian ?' 'Of course it is,' I replied, 'do you not read it ?' 'If any man *sin*, he has an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' 'Well,' said he, 'then I can go to sleep,' and he turned his head and closed his eyes for slumber, but death was too near, and the tramping of his horse's hoofs startled him, and again his mind was wandering. So it was until his eye became dim, and his ear dull, and his breathing shorter and shorter, until at last came the dreadful silence that told us all was over. He had a week before expressed an ardent hope to live until the term had opened, and God gave him his request. Just four years to the very day from the time that he and I, strangers to you all, began our duties in Genesee College, we were parted in death. He ascending in the chariot of fire, and I

and you, and all of us, with eyes full of tears, gazing after him."

The Doctor then gives a brief history of Brother Bragdon's life, the main points of which we have already given, and thus concludes his very able discourse :

"He has forbidden me to eulogize him, but is there a student here, embarrassed by poverty, and toiling for an education, that will not say, 'if Dr. Bragdon, unaided by friends, became what he was, starting out with no peculiar endowments, and with an exchequer of but \$30, shall I be disheartened?' When fainting and failing in your course, go and sit awhile at his grave, and think of him. It will inspire you with courage, and you cannot falter.

"As a preacher, he might not allow me to say he was profound or eloquent; but God was in his words. There are those here that will not forget that divine unction which attended his preaching. As you look at him to-day, his lips will almost move, and I doubt not, they will seem to say to your unregenerate soul, 'Will a man rob God?'"* And who that was even heedless of that life-time sermon, can be heedless of it now, and remain a robber—a robber of his God?"

"I abstain from direct words of consolation to the immediate family and friends of the deceased. Not that there is no room for consolation. I deem the case to be full of it. Few men could lie in a coffin, whose situation most of us would covet more than his. There is not a promise in all the compass of God's word, given to those from whose midst God has taken one to be constituted an angel of light, but these bereaved friends may apply it to themselves. In such a case, as there is a halo of heaven around the dying pillow, the grave is radiant with hope, and the resurrection full of delightful anticipations; but what a place is this for giving consolations? Sister, our heart bleeds for you. Brothers, our tears shall fall together upon this bier; daughter, we know you are fatherless, and feel it; children, it was too much to bear, when we were compelled to hear you told that you must no more put in your little prayers, 'God bless father;' but we will weep and be still. And you, this congregated host of sympathizing friends and neighbors,

* Alluding to one of his most impressive sermons from that text.

each of you, let this be the day of your espousals to God. Where better can you begin repentance, than by the grave-side of so good a man? His latest thoughts were of some of you, that amid the revivings that now bless our town, some of you might come unto God. Angels would rejoice at your repentance, but in all that shining host, there would not be a greater joy, than in the redeemed spirit that so lately occupied that crumbling tenement. Let him look down this day, from his lofty abode, and feel this thrill of unspeakable joy. 'Being dead, he yet speaketh.' "

CHAPTER XVII.

REV. HIRAM SHEPARD.

THE lamented subject of this sketch. was ushered into being in the town of Turin, Lewis County, N. Y., on the 8th day of July, 1804. Very early in life he became the subject of religious impressions, and at the age of nine years he became greatly alarmed by the sudden and accidental death of a beloved sister. So much so, that he began to pray in secret, and to forsake his youthful follies, and it was perhaps from a want of proper instruction and encouragement that he was not led at that tender age to give his heart to the Saviour, and become a youthful disciple of Jesus Christ. As time rolled on, however, he partially lost his seriousness and became as thoughtless and careless as before. At the age of fifteen, he became awakened again, through the influence of a pious, praying brother, and was for a while an earnest seeker of salvation, but it was not till three years after that he surrendered his whole heart to God, and became savingly converted. This happy event occurred at a camp-meeting, held in the town of Denmark, about twenty miles from his father's house, in the year 1822, when Hiram was eighteen years of age.

His experience was very much like the experience of every converted soul. In speaking of the transition from darkness to light, he remarked subsequently to a friend, "Oh! how changed was all nature to me. All things wore an entirely different aspect—the fields of grain, the pastures, the forests, all, all seemed engaged in adoration, while my full heart responding to nature's voice, cried out, 'praise the Lord!'" How very near to heaven's threshold is a soul in its earliest love! and yet the joy experienced then, though full and plenteous, is not the *summum bonum*, the highest good of the Christian, the greatest happiness that may be felt as our brother was able afterward to prove by his own experience in the divine life. Yet it was sufficient for the day and hour, and the young and happy convert went on his way rejoicing, because he had found the pearl of great price. Let infidels scoff and skeptics sneer at the idea of experimental religion. Yea! let the merely nominal Christian, Nicodemus like, inquire with wonder and amazement, "How can these things be?" It needs only the experience, such as Brother Shepard had, to prove to the unprejudiced mind that such things *are*, and if the *modus operandi*—the way of doing it, may not be fully explained any more than the sighing of the gentle zephyrs, or the mighty rushing of the tornado, yet the facts are there. "I was blind, I now see; I was condemned, I now feel justified; I was miserable, I now am happy; I once loved sin, I now hate it; I hated the godly, I now love them; I feared to die, love has taken away fear; old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new!" What a change! Can he doubt it? Can he discredit what God has done for him? Dare he say, this is all strong delusion, and that he has been led to believe a lie that he might be not damned, but saved from sin, from the love of evil, from all that hurts or destroys in God's holy mountain? Avaunt, infidelity! begone, skepticism! blush for shame, cold-hearted formalism! We *know* that we have passed from DEATH to LIFE, for God reveals

it to the soul of the trusting believer in Jesus Christ. Then let "God be true," and every man, if need be, a liar.

From the time of Brother Shepard's conversion, such was his ardent desire for the salvation of others, that he had an impression, vivid and lasting, that he must call sinners to repentance, and yet reasoning, as most men will reason under such circumstances, he attempted to argue himself into the belief that the voice he heard was not the voice of heaven, but that of the tempter. So unworthy, so unqualified, so utterly unfit and unprepared did he feel himself to be, that he thought if these impressions were really from above, the Lord was indeed "a hard master, reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strewed." But in spite of all his reasoning on the matter, the voice, from whatever source it came, continued to cry, "Go PREACH!" At length, he concluded if God would grant him an evidence of the divinity of his call, by blessing his labors, he would not only believe, but obey. The Lord of the harvest took him at his word, for soon after, at Dearfield Corners, a place at that time not visited by ministers of the gospel, or favored with preaching, young Shepard went and held prayer-meetings, and as the result of his labors, many souls were hopefully converted to God.

Astonished at the wonderful works of God wrought through his feeble instrumentality, he could no longer doubt that God had really called him to the work. Laying aside his excuses, therefore, he now freely offered his little all to the service of his Master, and adopting the sentiment, if not the language of our own immortal poet, he exclaimed with a full heart :

" Take my soul and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind and will,
All my goods and all my hours,
All I am, and all I feel,
All I think, or speak, or do.
Take my heart and keep it new.

Ere long he accepted a license to preach as a local preacher.

The license was *offered* by his brethren, not *sought* by him. No doubt, though young and inexperienced as he was, he understandingly felt that if God had a work for him to do in his church and in the world, his brethren would be as likely to know it as himself. Unlike many—we will correct ourselves—unlike *some*, who run before they are sent, and esteem it a great hardship if their brethren do not see as they do in regard to their call to the ministry, Brother Shepard was content to wait until God called him through his church, and invested him with authority to preach the Word by her instituted agencies. Soon after receiving license to preach, he was employed on the old Williamstown Circuit, where, though but a youth, he formed many pleasing acquaintances and associations, some of which continued through life. In later years, he frequently spoke of former friends on Williamstown Circuit, and particularly of Eli Strong and Friend Lewis, who labored and toiled with him, but who preceded him in the land of light. From Williamstown he went to Sandy Creek Circuit. On this circuit, Anson Fuller was preacher in charge, Nathaniel Salisbury being elder of the district, (Black River). On this circuit, he labored successfully until the following annual conference, in 1830, when he was sent to and traveled Cape Vincent Circuit, in connection with Rev. Freeman H. Stanton, then a young man. The circuit was large in extent, and the labors very hard, but the two young men, full of zeal and piety, went from place to place, visiting, praying, preaching and singing, and as a reward of their toil, some four hundred were supposed to have been converted. Truly, God owned the labors of these striplings, and whatever doubts may have previously existed as to their ministerial call, these must all have vanished, in the presence of these numerous seals of their apostleship. In reference to the labors of this year, Brother Stanton writes the author as follows: “Brother H. Shepard and myself went on to Cape Vincent Circuit in the fall of 1830. The circuit then embraced what is now Cape Vincent, Three

Mile Bay, Clayton, LaFargeville, Depauville, Point Peninsula, Pillar Point and St. Lawrence charges. It was a good year. Brother Shepard was well received by the people, and God greatly blessed us. He was a good man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost. That was one of the happiest years of my life." At the close of this year, having been duly recommended, he joined the annual conference on trial. Having been employed for several years previously as a supply on various charges, he found himself fully prepared to enter upon the duties of the regular work, and to stand up, side by side, with his brethren in the conference. He accordingly allowed his name to be presented to the conference, which cordially received him.

Having joined the conference, he was sent to Steuben Circuit, in the Oneida District, as preacher in charge. It was unusual then to appoint young unordained men to the charge of circuits, and the fact of his having been thus appointed immediately on being received into the conference, is an evidence of the confidence reposed in him by his senior brethren. Another thing should be considered as it regards this his first appointment. Rev. Charles Giles, the then patriarch of the conference, who joined the traveling connection in 1805, was, at this time, 1831, in feeble health, and sustained a superannuated relation to the conference, was also appointed to Steuben Circuit—so that between them both, the aged sire and the active youth, the venerated "elder" and the unordained stripling, the circuit was pretty well manned. At the close of this year, he was united in marriage to Miss Amanda Butterfield, of Watertown, then a young lady, well adapted, as it regards piety and female accomplishments, to share with him the lights and shadows of an itinerant life, and who continued till the moment of his death to be to him the safe counselor, the agreeable companion, the affectionate and provident wife and the devoted mother. She feels lonely now, but God is the strength of her heart and her portion forever.

In 1832, Brother Shepard was sent to Starkbridge Circuit as preacher in charge, with George Gary as his presiding elder. Here he remained one year, and at its close was admitted into full connection into the conference, and ordained deacon, receiving his appointment to Vestal Circuit, Broome County, Susquehanna District. The next year, he went to Carbondale, in Pennsylvania, where he remained one year, and at the conference of 1835, held in Oswego, he was elected to the full order of the ministry, and appointed to Cape Vincent Circuit in connection with James Irvine as junior colleague. For some reason, which does not appear, although elected elder in 1835, he was not ordained until 1836, as appears by the general minutes. In the latter year, he was appointed to Brownville charge, in the Black River District, under Gardner Baker, presiding elder. In consequence of sickness in his family, at the session of the Black River Conference, held in Potsdam in August, 1837, he was compelled to ask for a location, which was granted him by the conference, and he remained in the local ranks for two years, when he was re-admitted, and appointed to Gouverneur charge, then included in Gouverneur District. The following year, he was removed to Theresa, where he remained two years, to the great satisfaction of the people of that charge. In 1842, he was sent to French Creek, or Clayton, as it is now called, where he also remained two years. In 1844, he preached in Booneville, Rome District, under the superintendence of Albert D. Peck as presiding elder, to which charge he was returned in 1845. The following year, he was stationed in Martinsburgh, Lewis County, and in 1847, on Copenhagen Circuit, with Rev. G. W. Plank as co-laborer, and in 1848, on the same charge, with Silas C. Kinney as second preacher.

The two following years, 1849-50, he was stationed in Ogdensburg. Here his labors were somewhat arduous. During the previous year, while the author was stationed in that place, the Lord of the harvest sent down a general

shower of grace. Over two hundred were hopefully converted, and about one hundred and fifty united with the society on probation. The chief honored instrument of the first awakening was Brother Fay H. Purdy, an exhorter who came to the pastor's aid, and labored diligently and successfully between two and three weeks. After he left, the brethren on adjacent charges kindly lent their assistance. Rev. Isaac L. Hunt, at that time presiding elder of the district, Rev. L. D. White, then of Lisbon, Rev. Joseph H. Lamb, and others, hearing the "Macedonian cry," went and rendered all the assistance possible. The "extra effort," or protracted meeting, continued for over eight weeks, and before the revival subsided, we were visited by Rev. Bishop Janes, who, by his preaching and godly counsel "confirmed" the faith of the disciples.

The congregation became so large that it was thought necessary to erect a new church edifice, although the old chapel was of good size and capable of seating a congregation of six hundred people. A subscription was circulated, but before this could be completed, or the work of building commenced, the ever-revolving conference year closed, and with it the services of the author as pastor. It now devolved on Brother Shepard to assume the task of carrying on to completion the work just commenced. And here it may be proper to state, without the imputation of egotism to the author, what every experienced Methodist minister knows—that it is not an easy matter for a stranger at once to ingratiate himself into the favor and confidence of a people who have just enjoyed a powerful revival of religion, and from whom has been removed, according to the economy of our church, the pastor under whose labors the revival has taken place. The reasons for this are apparent to every mind. Indeed, so delicate is the position of a successor under such circumstances, that few preachers court the appointment, and when they repair to the place, they go with much fear and trembling, even though in talent and ability

they may be far superior to the man they follow. With some degree of trepidation did Brother Shepard go to his appointed field of labor in Ogdensburg, but he met with a kind and hearty reception, and by that prudence that ever marked his course, he soon convinced the church and congregation that he was the "right man in the right place."

Two things operated together to render his labors successful and his relation pleasant; and we mention them only for the benefit of younger brethren in the ministry. First: As Brother Shepard mingled among his people, whatever errors in management he may have discovered in the course of his predecessor's administration, he was wise enough not to allude to them or to magnify them so as to build himself up at the expense of another—a fatal error into which some young men fall. Second: His predecessor, though removed from the charge, yet having intercourse with his former friends, either by occasional visits or by epistle, was especially careful not to minify to the smallest extent, the piety, the talents or the value of the labors of his successor, but rather took every opportunity of producing in the minds of his former parishioners an impression favorable to their pastor.

But to return from this digression, if digression it is: Brother Shepard entered at once upon the work before him. The circulation of the subscription was continued, the old church was removed from its site and in place thereof a large and commodious brick edifice was erected in its place, which in due season was solemnly dedicated to the worship of God. While thus laboring in connection with the respected lay brethren on that charge to enlarge the visible borders of their Zion, our brother was not unmindful of the spiritual interests of his charge, but by faithful preaching and pastoral visitation, by punctually attending the prayer-meetings and the various class-meetings, he demonstrated to his flock that he was one among them, and though placed over them as pastor, he did not feel above them, only as he

would be their servant for Jesus' sake. The result was, notwithstanding the large number of converts he found when he went to the charge, and the labors and toil incident to the erection of a new church edifice, and the fact that during a considerable portion of the time the society was destitute of a convenient place of worship, at the end of his two years' term he left precisely the same number in society that he found—a fact that speaks well for the character of the former revival, as well as of the fidelity and success of Brother Shepard. It is also a matter which calls for deep and profound gratitude to God that the society in Ogdensburg has continued since that period to enjoy more or less of the revival spirit, and that, notwithstanding the “fiery trials” through which they have been called to pass within later years, they are still holding on in the way of life with an increased membership and still greater prospects of success.

At the close of his pastoral term in Ogdensburg, he was appointed presiding elder of the newly formed Ogdensburg District, on which he remained the full term of four years. His labors on the district were properly appreciated by both preachers and people, and he was successful in promoting the temporal and spiritual interests of his extended field of labor in all their departments. In 1855, he received the appointment of presiding elder of Syracuse District, but from a variety of causes, most of which were beyond his control, he did not succeed as well on this district as on the former. He remained here two years, and was then appointed to Mexico station. Here he remained one year and was sent back to Theresa, a former and favorite field of labor with him, where he for the second term spent two very pleasant and successful years.

In 1860, he received his appointment to Malone station, in Franklin County. Although in feeble health and unable to do full effective service, his age and experience, and above all, his piety and zeal, were such as to win the affection and esteem of the people of that enterprising and

beautiful village. Notwithstanding his increasing physical infirmities, he was gladly welcomed back the second year and he as cheerfully returned. But before the year closed he was entirely prostrated by a disease of the heart, which not only prevented him from preaching, but confined him to his bed, with but little prospect at times that he would ever recover sufficiently to leave his house. His place, however, in the pulpit was well supplied by Rev. Thomas Richey, a superannuated minister residing in Moira, and by other brethren on adjoining charges.

Previous to the session of the Black River Conference of 1862, Brother Shepard had so far regained his strength as to think it possible for him to visit the conference once more before he took his departure for the spirit world. Accordingly, at the opening of the session in Oswego he was in his chosen seat in the left hand corner slips of the church, near the pulpit, a position which he invariably selected as his permanent locality, no matter where or in what church the conference was held. In the appointment of committees, he manifested his usual degree of interest and made his usual motion for a committee on public worship. He was also appointed a member of one of the most important committees of that session, viz: On the division of the conference. On the morning of Friday, he opened the session with devotional exercises, and in the afternoon of that day, delivered a well deserved eulogy on the character of Rev. Harvey Chapin, who had died during the year. On the following Monday, he presented the resolution inserted in the preface to this work requesting the author to prepare another volume of the "Black River Conference Memorial." Although very feeble in body and emaciated in appearance as was our worthy and venerable brother, we little supposed there would be occasion to write this Memoir so soon, but so it is. He that spoke so eloquently and feelingly in reference to the departure of an aged member of our body, has in his turn been called to the same land of

"spirits bright." It was evident, however, to all his brethren, that his sojourn with us could not be long. We hoped, however, that he might survive for months, nay, that we might possibly look upon his stately form, and listen to his mild accents at yet another session of the conference. But we hoped in vain.

At the close of the session, in company with a large number of preachers and other conference visitors, he returned to Ogdensburg on the steamer, and from thence to Malone by railroad. The trip across the lake to Kingston was an exceedingly boisterous and unpleasant one. Most of the passengers and some of the crew were in technical language "sea sick." Our brother, although not among the list of those called to experience the horrors of such sickness, nevertheless, was more or less affected by surrounding circumstances. He reached his quiet home somewhat exhausted, but still was able to be around. Having taken a superannuated relation to the conference, his kind hearted sympathizing friends and brethren in Malone, foreseeing that this must be his future relation, and having strongly urged him to settle down and spend his last days in their midst, he in deference to their wishes, and in accordance with his own desire and that of his family, concluded so to do. He made preparations for the erection of a dwelling house a few rods in rear of the Methodist church, where he and others hoped he might yet enjoy for a length of time the society of his family, and what was scarcely less precious to him, the society of his brethren. He found himself able, also, to attend the services of the sanctuary, and to pray ardently for the success of the young but able minister who was appointed his successor. Thus days passed away until Saturday, the 24th of May, when the astounding news went forth through the quiet village of Malone, of the sudden death of Rev. Ashbel Parmelee, D. D., of that place.

This aged minister of the gospel had been pastor of the

Presbyterian Church in that village for nearly half a century, but for some years had been retired from the pastorate. When Methodism was first introduced into Malone, Mr. Parmelee was not prepared, from want of information, to bid it God speed. Being, however, a man of generous impulses and sound judgment, he adopted for his motto the declaration of Gamaliel: "Refrain from these men and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found ever to fight against God." In the year 1835, Rev. Charles L. Dunning was appointed by the bishop at conference, to the charge of Malone station. During the year the Methodist society enjoyed a glorious revival of religion, as the result of which many influential persons were added to the church, and the other denominations in the place shared more or less its benefits. The former prejudices existing against the Methodists were in a great measure removed from the mind of other Christians, but from none more than the mind of Mr. Parmelee. He was convinced the work was of God, and ever after he delighted to acknowledge them as his brethren in the Lord, and to hail a Methodist preacher of even moderate talent as a fellow-laborer in the gospel. Such a man and such a minister would, as a matter of course, be universally esteemed and beloved. Thus he lived in all good conscience toward God and toward men, until the day before mentioned, when suddenly, without a moment's warning, he dropped to the floor a lifeless corpse!

When the startling news was conveyed to Brother Shepard, he exclaimed: "He has gone to join the hallelujahs of the skies. I will join him very soon!" That night he retired to rest no worse, apparently, than he had previously been. In the morning, his companion arose, leaving him in bed. Soon he called her to his bedside, desiring to be assisted, as he felt strangely. The chill of death had seized his mortal frame, and turning on his side, he quietly breathed

his life away, almost before his family were aware that he was any worse. Thus another sudden death had occurred, and another aged veteran of the cross had departed this life for the better life above.

The disease with which he died was caused by a derangement of the blood vessels of the heart. This disease had been contracted during his residence at Theresa, in 1860, when the Methodist Church in that place was consumed by fire. His exertions on that occasion were such as to produce spasmodic affection of the heart, which not only became chronic, but increased in violence to the close of life.

On the following Wednesday, his funeral was attended at the Methodist Church in Malone. There was an immense congregation present to testify their respect for the memory of the deceased. The portico in front of the church, the pulpit and orchestra were appropriately draped in mourning. The order of Free and Accepted Masons, of which our brother was a member, was present in full mourning regalia. The Methodist ministers on Potsdam and Ogdensburg Districts, to the number of twelve, were present. There was present, also, at the funeral, his beloved brother, Rev. Gideon Shepard, of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada—a man who, like his brother Hiram, has unflinchingly adhered to the church of his early choice through weal and woe, and who, although now somewhat advanced in years, is still standing upon Zion's walls, blowing the silver trump. Also, his eldest daughter, accompanied by her husband, Rev. G. W. Whitney, of the Newark Conference. The funeral sermon was preached by Rev. F. F. Jewell, pastor of the church, he being assisted by Revs. I. L. Hunt, P. D. Gorrie, J. H. Lamb, B. S. Wright, O. C. Cole, T. Richey and R. E. King in the services. The text from Micah vii, 2—"The good man is perished out of the earth,"—was exceedingly appropriate, and most eloquently applied to the death of the deceased. His remains, enclosed in a substantial coffin, covered with black cloth, were deposited in the village cemetery, on

the west side of the river, where they will undoubtedly lie until the resurrection of the just.

The state of his mind just before his death may be inferred from the following extract from the obituary written by Brother Jewell, which proves that though the summons was a sudden one, he was not unprepared for it:

“ * * * * * A cheerful Christian life closed in a happy peaceful death. There might have been times in the earlier stages of his sickness, when multiplied pains would make earth seem wearisome, and cause him to sigh for home, feeling like Paul, ‘In a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better.’ Indeed, he was constantly in such communion with the rest above, as to abide under an experience of its infinite desirableness. The disease by which our brother was brought to the grave was in its nature calculated to lay a heavy burden upon his religious feelings, producing that restlessness and discontent which is very irritating. But it only produced a slight ripple upon the surface, while the current of spiritual life flowed deeply and calmly through the channels of the soul.

“He assured us, and wished us to bear his testimony to the world after he was gone, that his confidence in the great fundamental principles of Christianity remained unshaken to the last. They were to him a sure foundation upon which his feet rested amid the swellings of Jordan. As he was declaring his distrust of self, and his faith in Christ as his only hope, we repeated to him the words of the dying Scotch divine, the pious McLaren, who, upon being asked by his colleague just before his death what he was doing, replied, ‘I am gathering together all my prayers, all my sermons, all my good deeds, and all my ill deeds, and am going to throw them all overboard, and swim to glory on the plank of free grace.’ ‘Oh,’ said our brother, ‘that is just as I feel, saved by grace.’ He cheerfully recognized every blessing as coming directly from the Lord. The morning before the one on which he died, he awoke and immediately commenced praising God aloud for the sleep he had enjoyed, saying, ‘Oh! how good the Lord is, I will praise him,’ and thus continued for some time. The night before his departure he declared himself in possession of a peace and tranquility which was inexpressible heavenly,

causing him to frequently break forth in the utterances, 'Oh what peace! what peace I enjoy.'"

No one who knew Brother Shepard could for a moment doubt his piety or deep devotion to the cause of God. He was a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and evinced at all times an unyielding attachment to the church and the institutions of Christianity. Yet it would be too much to claim infallibility for even him. Like the rest of mankind he was human, and being human was liable to err even with the best of motives and the most honest intentions. We have heard it stated that he sometimes lacked what phrenologists call firmness, but we are inclined to believe that if ever he betrayed a want of steady adherence to certain positions, once assumed, it was because he looked at the matter in a different light from what he had previously done. In other words, he saw some good reason for changing his mind, or he viewed the position then and now taken, as one that might or might not be assumed without involving the question of principle; certainly, so far as religion and the work of God in their general principles are concerned, no man could be firmer, or more steadfast and unmovable, than Brother Shepard. At all times, at home or abroad, in the church or in the street, in the pulpit or in the parlor, the same steady, persevering course of piety was pursued.

In physical proportion, Brother Shepard had a large, robust frame. He was tall, and though in early life somewhat slim, yet, as he grew older, he inclined to corpulency. His hair when young was flaxen, and when old was quite gray. He had a mild blue eye, and whether in the pulpit or out, made quite a commanding appearance.

In point of talent, Brother Shepard was far above mediocrity. He had much native talent, but more that was acquired by hard study, and persevering research. His education was quite respectable, as his sermons and other public efforts proved. He was a deep and close thinker, and

frequently ventured upon metaphysical ground in his preaching and writings.

As a preacher, he occupied quite an elevated position in the ranks of the ministry. He was not, indeed, what some would call profound, but his sermons were good and practical, and evinced much patient thought and hard study in their composition. Like other men, he had his favorite subjects, and seemed to feel more at home in handling some things than others, still he seldom met with a failure in his boldest attempts at oratory, unless his surroundings were such as to embarrass his thoughts. He delighted often to dwell on the important and fundamental doctrines of Christianity, such as the atonement, the resurrection and immortality of the soul, and his pulpit efforts were generally well received and appreciated. Unlike some others who attain their zenith of usefulness and fame as preachers at the middle of life, Brother Shepard grew stronger as he advanced toward old age, and it is no doubt true, that he never was more popular as a preacher than during the few last years of his life.

He was also a good pastor, visiting his people regardless of their position in society and without enquiring whether they were rich or poor. In him, all alike found a friend, one to whom they might safely look for counsel and advice. In the prayer-meeting and class-meeting he was constantly present when health would allow, or other circumstances did not prevent his attendance.

He took quite an interest in the anti-slavery movement of the last quarter of a century. He was opposed—as has been the conference of which he was so long a member—to the perpetuation of that accursed system of wrong, which chattelizes and brutalizes human beings. He opposed its continuance and performed his share of the work in producing a reform of public sentiment at the North, in regard to the anti-slavery work.

We will bring this chapter to a close by saying that in all

the domestic relations of life, Brother Shepard was without reproach. As a husband, father, brother, son, he loved and was beloved in return. Those who survive him, especially his deeply afflicted widow, and his now orphaned children feel that their loss is irreparable. The kind father, the affectionate husband has sped his upward flight to glory-land, where may it be the privilege of all the members of his family, and the ministers left behind, and the church of God in general, to hail his happy spirit and join him in singing glory to the Lamb! He died May 25th, 1862.

CHAPTER XVIII.

REV. SMYTH GRIFFIN.

THE author exceedingly regrets that in regard to the life and labors of this excellent man and minister of Jesus Christ, so few memoranda are to be found; even the usual "Memoir" in the annual printed minutes of the conference seems to be wanting, so that we find ourselves unable to prepare such an account of his ministry as we know his merits and success demand, and might be expected by his many friends who hold his memory in affectionate esteem. In regard to the time or place of his birth we have no information, nor of his boyhood life and early education, nor of his conversion or call to the ministry.

Brother Griffin was admitted on trial in the Black River Conference in 1851, at its session in Oswego, and was appointed to the charge of Rossie mission, H. Shepard, presiding elder. 1852, he was continued on trial and sent to Natural Bridge Circuit, on the same district. In 1853, he was still continued on trial, and returned to the same charge.

In 1854, he was received into full connection in the conference, ordained deacon by Bishop Morris, at Camden, N. Y., and sent to Lisbon Circuit, under the same presiding elder. The following year, he preached in South Canton and Pierrepont, with C. L. Dunning as his presiding elder. In 1856, he returned to his charge of the previous year, having at the conference held in Syracuse, been ordained elder by Bishop Waugh. In 1857, he was sent to Brasher Circuit, in Potsdam District, P. D. Gorrie, presiding elder, and the following year to Bangor Circuit, on the same district, with L. D. White, as presiding elder, where he remained two years, and was then appointed to Moira Station, in 1860. In 1861, he was sent to Three Mile Bay Circuit, in Watertown district, G. Baker, presiding elder, to which charge he was returned in 1862, and where he closed his life and labors October 30th of the same year, exclaiming as he departed this life, to gaze upon the scenes of another life: "All bright!"

Thus died a good man and a useful minister, and although there are but few written records of his life and labors left behind from which to draw, in the preparation of a more extensive memoir, yet we feel prepared to say from the limited acquaintance we were permitted to form with him, while serving as his presiding elder, for a single year, that he was emphatically a man of God, deeply devoted to his work, and earnest in his efforts to save souls. As a preacher, he was not one of the brilliant kind. His sermons were solid, methodical and Methodistical, terse and pungent, plain and convincing—of such a style and character that no congregation ever felt ashamed of them. He was a man who possessed a great fund of knowledge, having acquired a respectable English education and passed creditable examinations in the course of conference study preparatory to his admission and ordination. We thus leave him with this brief tribute of respect to his memory, not forgetting that "the memory of the just is blessed."

CHAPTER XIX.

REV. BENJAMIN PHILLIPS.

THIS worthy and beloved minister of the gospel was born in the city of Utica, in the state of New York, on the 21st day of October, 1805. His parents were natives of Wales, having emigrated to this country when young, and having become acquainted with each other in Utica, where they subsequently married. Benjamin was the eldest of nine children—five sons and four daughters—some of whom have long since slumbered with the dead.

When Benjamin was eight or nine years old, his parents removed from Utica to the village of Cazenovia. Here they remained about two years, when they again removed to Homer, Cortland County, N. Y. At the age of eleven, he went to live with a farmer by the name of George Washington Sweeden, who was remembered by Benjamin as a “very good man,” and a member of the Presbyterian Church. With this man, he remained two years, working on the farm, when he left him for the purpose of learning a trade, and after a short time, he became an indented apprentice to Mr. Norman Curtis, of Homer, a tanner and shoemaker, with whom he remained six years, or until the period of attaining his majority.

About six months before he became of age, he sought and found the pearl of great price—a most happy event in his youthful history. Previously to this, he had commenced devising plans for the acquirement of wealth, and even for a while after his conversion, he saw nothing in the dealings of providence to indicate any different course of conduct, and certainly none that pointed to the sacred office as the post of duty. Others, however, who were acquainted with him, foresaw that God had a work for him to do in the church, and after repeated conversations with him on the subject, he



REV. BENJ. PHILIPS.

resolved to leave all in the hands of God, and go anywhere and do anything the providence of God should dictate. At the earnest solicitation of Rev. G. W. Densmore, at that time preacher in charge of Cortlandville station, he resolved to become a student in the Cazenovia Seminary. He went with fear and trembling, but to encourage him, his friend Densmore took him in his own carriage from Cortland to the village of Cazenovia, where, for the first year, he boarded in the family of Rev. George Gary. To young Benjamin, Brother Gary proved himself a father and wise counselor, and whose advice and pious admonitions, together with his close-pointed and timely criticisms, were highly conducive to his advancement in science, as well as in religion. During the last six months of his stay at the seminary, he boarded in the family of Doctor Nolton, a pious and worthy physician of the village, who, with his excellent lady, was deeply devoted to the cause of Christ, and who became so ardently attached to their young friend, that when he left them, they declined receiving anything for his board.

Under the supervision and principalship of Augustus W. Smith, L. L. D., who was then at the head of the faculty, Brother Phillips received his academic education, while under the preaching of Rev. John Dempster, D. D., who was, the greater part of the time, preacher in charge of the station, he not only became more firmly resolved to dedicate his life to the ministry, but became much better prepared to wield successfully the sword of the spirit. On leaving the seminary, he returned to his father's, in Cortlandville, where he spent a few weeks, preparatory to entering fully upon the work before him.

We should have before stated, that prior to becoming a student at Cazenovia, Brother Phillips had received license to exhort in Homer. His license dates Nov. 13th, 1827, and that he received license to preach in Cazenovia, October 25th, 1828. In the following June, the Oneida Conference held its annual session in Cazenovia, Bishop Roberts pre-

siding, at which time our young brother was admitted on trial, and appointed to Marcellus Circuit, in company with Brother Gary and Doolittle as his associate preachers. These were men of deep and varied experience, and as Brother Phillips says in his journal, "just such men as a boy, or rather youth like myself needed." The year passed away pleasantly, and they enjoyed a good degree of spiritual prosperity. At a camp meeting, held on the circuit during the year, Brother Gary announced the fact that there had been 104 conversions as the result of the meeting. The eccentric Lorenzo Dow was present, and assisted in his peculiar manner. At the close of their year's labor, it was found that some 300 souls had been added to the church.

At the next session of the conference, held in Utica, Bishop Hedding presiding, Brother Phillips was continued on trial, and appointed to Pompey Circuit, with Revs. Goodwin, Stoddard and Alvin Torrey as his senior colleagues. This year was also a pleasant and profitable one to the young preacher. At the following session of the conference, (1831,) Brother Phillips was received into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Soule. He was sent to Brownville and Sackets harbor, which places then formed a two weeks' circuit. While on this charge, he boarded in the family of Brother Hiscock, who resided in Brownville, and of whom he speaks with grateful remembrance. At this latter place, he remarks: "We commenced building a church, which was finished by my successor. Here we had at the time, a good state of things and some revival, but none at the Harbor. At this point on the charge, we had some trouble, but nothing very serious, and yet enough to prevent, at least to some extent, the revival of God's work. Brother Azariah Hall, of precious memory, was my immediate predecessor, and being extensively useful and popular among the people, it was with great difficulty that the friends could submit to talents of a less popular stamp. Besides, they had enjoyed, under his administration, a glorious revival. Hence, my

year among them was rather a cleansing one, and not noted for a direct building up of the membership. And this kind of work is generally anything but popular in the church or out of it."

At the next conference (1832) held at Manlius Square, Bishop Hedding presiding, Brother Phillips was appointed to Lowville and Martinsburgh, with Rev. Schuyler Hoes as his colleague. During the year Brother Phillips was married in the village of Lansingville, Tompkins County, N. Y., to Miss Caroline Matilda Fletcher, a young lady of more than ordinary talent, and who for some years had been a devoted and successful teacher. He found in her that help a minister needs—a friend and counselor—as also a bearer of his burdens. The year was a pleasant one for both pastor and people, for although disappointed at an early period of the year by the removal of Brother Hoes to the charge of the Adams station, God blessed the labors of his successor, Rev. Richard Lyle, so that on the whole they enjoyed a year of prosperity.

In 1833, the conference again met in Cazenovia, and Bishop Hedding again presided, by whom he was ordained elder. At the close of the session his name was found attached to Potsdam station, St. Lawrence County. Of this change, we find the following remarks in his journal: "The people of Potsdam are among the most refined and intelligent in all that region of country. They are principally from Vermont. They are industrious, and many of them are considered wealthy. Among other excellent traits of character, they may be put down as a church-going people. Our membership are among the most respectable, intelligent and pious in the community. They have one of the best choirs I ever heard sing—and withal, the leading singers are very devotional, being among the eminently spiritual worshipers. Though I performed a large amount of labor on this charge, yet there was no general revival of the work of God among the people; still,

there were a few professed conversions, besides quickenings in the membership. The brethren appeared generally friendly and affectionate. I think very highly of the people of Potsdam. May the Lord bless and forever save them!"

At the next conference, held in Auburn, Brother Phillips was appointed to Carthage Circuit, with Rev. G. W. Barney as his colleague, where they enjoyed at different appointments refreshing showers of grace. Nothing, however, of universal interest, seems to have occurred during the year. At the conference of 1835, held in Oswego, Brother Phillips was sent to Brownville station. Of his labors at this place, he remarks: "All things were in a prosperous condition till the last half of the year, when a portion of the society became very much opposed to the use of a bass viol in the choir. The spirit of party feeling immediately showed itself. What the preacher could do to restore peace and unity, he did, but it took a long time to do what little was accomplished in this matter. Even at this distance of time, I doubt whether the sore is fully healed. 'Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!'"

In addition to these church difficulties, our brother was sorely afflicted in his family by the sickness and death of both of his children, within two weeks of each other. The disease of which they died was dysentery, which spread through the village like a fearful pestilence. But the grace of God, ever present with those who seek it, sustained him in the midst of his sorrows.

At the first session of the newly organized Black River Conference, held in Watertown, Bishop Waugh in the chair, Brother Phillips was appointed to the charge of Jordan station, where he enjoyed some success, but had a year of trial and perplexity, arising from the expulsion of a local preacher. Here, likewise, he caught a severe cold, which so affected and inflamed his lungs that many thought he would die with the "quick consumption." His health, how-

ever, rallied a little. He visited New York city and several towns in Massachusetts, and after an absence of several weeks, returned with improved health to his charge, where he finished his year's labors with a feeling of gratitude that God had spared his life.

In 1837, at the conference held¹ in Potsdam, he received his appointment to Clay Circuit, in Onondaga County, where he enjoyed, during the year, quite an extensive revival of religion. People and preachers labored harmoniously together, and at the close of the year it was fully expected by him and the people, that he would be re-appointed for another year, but at the conference held in Fulton, to his great disappointment, his name was attached to Oswego station, at that time one of the most important charges in the conference. His views and feelings on this occasion can be better expressed in his own words :

“Left for conference with the understanding that I should return with a view to erect a church in Liverpool, one of the appointments on the charge. But the result showed how liable men are to disappointment. I was sent in another direction. This was to all on the circuit an unexpected event and was attended with a feeling not only of disappointment but of disaffection, which proved detrimental to the interests of the charge. The wisdom of the appointing power is generally evinced, and is eminently successful in the exercise of its prerogatives, but in this case, it appeared to be one of those instances in which its power and prudence are, to the minds of such as are not well acquainted with our system of itinerancy, looked upon as questionable. It is much like other great and good systems that cannot be excelled, yet there are occasional defects. Indeed, I often wonder that there are so few mistakes made in carrying out our system, and especially so when there are so many changes going on. When systems that have long been regarded as sound are being tested, our system of itinerancy will stand the closest scrutiny.”

As before stated, in 1838, he was sent to Oswego station where he spent a very pleasant year, and where he received many tokens of kindness. He fully expected

to return a second year, "But," he remarks, "the Lord ordered it otherwise, as did the conference, and so I was content." He was appointed in 1839, to Sackets Harbor, his former field of labor in 1831. Though *disappointed* again, he enjoyed a year of great prosperity, and took incipient steps toward the erection of a church edifice. A lot of land in an eligible position was purchased, a subscription was circulated, and the enterprise met with general favor among the people. At the next conference, (1840,) held in Pulaski, Bishop Roberts presiding, Brother Phillips was re-appointed to Sackets Harbor. His congregation during his second year increased in size and respectability, and after having secured all he could by subscription for building the church, he appointed a public "bee" for the purpose of collecting building materials. The bee commenced in December, and continued till the following April, the people entering into the matter with much zeal. Some gave timber, others lumber, others labor, others team work, etc., etc., all tending to accomplish the great end in view, the erection of a suitable house for the worship of God. Brother Phillips mentions in his journal the names of certain gentlemen who greatly aided and encouraged him in the enterprise, and among them Col. Elisha Camp, Samuel Hooker, and Asabel Smith. The ensuing winter the church was completed, and dedicated to the worship of Almighty God under the supervision of Rev. George Sawyer, who had succeeded Brother Phillips in the charge of the station.

In this connection it may not be amiss for the author to remind his brethren in the ministry of the power and influence they may and should exert, in building up the church of God, both as regards its spiritual and temporal interests. How few conversions would the church witness from year to year, were it not for a faithful ministry; and how small the number of houses of worship that would be erected, did not the ministers begin, continue and end the work! After many years observation, we are led to think that neither the

temporal or spiritual interests of our Zion could or would be promoted without the earnest efforts of the ministry. Indeed, we know not of a single revival that ever took place without the labors, directly or indirectly of the preachers of the gospel, nor do we know of a single church that was ever erected, except as the result of the efforts of some laborious minister. Our brethren in the laity, however they may coöperate and make pecuniary sacrifices for the erection of churches, little know the amount of labor and anxiety voluntarily assumed and unselfishly expended in such enterprises by the minister, who is in many respects the originator and completer of the same. But even should the active coöperators in a church appreciate and remember with gratitude the labors and sacrifices of some man of God, who raised them up as a people to an honorable, perhaps enviable position among the churches of the land; a few years pass away, "another king" arises, "who knew not Joseph," and the services of the now, perhaps, aged pilgrim are forgotten. Still God remembers him, and carries on his work from year to year, and from age to age, and when Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven, his reward will be with him. Labor then, my brother, for the upbuilding of the church of Christ, while you listen to the encouraging voice of your Master as he says: "Lo! I come to give to every man according to his work."

1841. This year conference sat at Rome, Bishop Soule presiding. Had it been possible to have returned Brother Phillips to Sackets Harbor for a third year's labor, without a violation of the rule, no doubt the bishop and his council would have gladly consented to the appointment. But the rule could not be violated with propriety, and so our brother was sent to French Creek charge, where he had the privilege of laboring for the erection of another church, begun under the administration of his predecessor, and which he had the pleasure of seeing dedicated early in the winter. During this year his wife spent the summer in visiting her

friends in Pennsylvania, and returning in October, they recommenced house-keeping. The year was a prosperous one.

At the conference of 1842, held in Watertown by Bishop Hedding, at the earnest solicitation of the brethren at Sackets Harbor, Brother Phillips was again appointed to that station. The brethren at French Creek were unwilling to lose his services, but in true Methodist style yielded to the arrangements of Providence. The year was remarkably prosperous. He commenced a series of meetings on New Year's eve, and continued them for three months, the interest not seeming to abate during that length of time. Nearly one hundred joined the church, many of whom belonged to some of the first families in the place.

The following year, 1843, he labored in Weedsport, Cayuga County, where he enjoyed some prosperity; but when the Methodist community was somewhat annoyed and divided by the "Wesleyan secession," Brother Phillips, as an "Episcopal" Methodist minister, of course stood up in defence of the church of his choice. He held a public discussion with a "Wesleyan" minister, and although not a controversialist, he succeeded in convincing the large audience of the correctness of his position, who, by an overwhelming majority vote decided in favor of the old church, which produced such an effect on the mind of his opponent that he soon after left the place, and troubled them no more.

At the conference of 1844, held at Potsdam, Bishop Hamline presiding, Brother Phillips believed it to be his duty to locate. This step he took at the earnest solicitation of his friends residing in Trumansburgh, in the north-western part of Pennsylvania, who were ever anxious to have Brother Phillips move among them. Accordingly, after his location, he removed with his family to the place already named, where he was received with every token of respect and affection, and where he expected to make a permanent abode. But man's ways and designs are not always according to the divine will.

About the time of his arrival among his friends, a most alarming and fatal epidemic began to prevail, so much so, as to produce gloominess and to cast a shadow over all things that would otherwise have been bright and joyous. After spending a few weeks among his friends, and believing that he had erred in asking for a location, he returned with his family to the state of New York, and resided for the remainder of the conference year in Lansingville, Tompkins County, twenty-five miles south of the city of Auburn, where he was employed by the presiding elder to preach on Groton Circuit.

In regard to the matter of his location, he makes the following sensible remarks in his journal: "I always regretted that foolish step of location; hope I have fully repented it. Every one who locates should mature the matter fully, before he takes the responsibility into his own hands, so to speak. That there are circumstances under which it is duty, I have no doubt, but those instances are few and far between."

Although the year 1844 was one of affliction and disappointment to Brother Phillips, he found true friends in all his wanderings. After his return to the state of New York and his employment on Groton Circuit, he found in his colleagues, Revs. Henry Ercunbruek and Sylvester Minier, noble-hearted, generous men, who sympathized with him in his disappointments and trials, and encouraged him to renew his relations to the conference. Accordingly, at the session of the Black River Conference of 1845, held in Mexicoville, he was re-admitted and appointed to the charge of Victory Circuit, with Rev. Browning Nichols, then a local preacher, as his assistant. Here he labored successfully, not only in the ministry, but assiduously to purchase and pay for a parsonage at Victory village. This place is equidistant between Auburn and Oswego, on the direct stage-route—about twenty miles from either place. So well did he succeed this year in his work, that at the following conference session, held

in Lowville, he and Brother Nichols were re-appointed to Victory Circuit, where they enjoyed revival influences at several appointments on the charge.

At the next conference, (1847,) held at Malone, Franklin County, N. Y., Bishop Morris presiding, the subject of this Memoir was sent to the village of Baldwinsville, in Onondaga County. This was and is an important charge, embracing a very respectable and intelligent membership. He was, however, soon attacked with the fever and ague, a disease very prevalent in this locality. His wife's health also was very poor, suffering, as she was, from a disease of the pulmonary organs. These, together with some opposition in the church, rendered the year on the whole, rather unpleasant. Nevertheless, a few were converted and reclaimed, and the church as a whole was greatly edified. The following year, 1848, the conference sat at Adams, Jefferson County, at which session Brother Phillips was elected assistant secretary. He was assigned to the duty of journalizing, for which he was well adapted, as he wrote a round, plain hand, remarkably legible and exact. Although more or less attacked with fever and ague during the session, he succeeded in discharging the somewhat onerous duties of journalizing secretary to the satisfaction of the conference. He also received his appointment to Salina station, one of the three charges in the city of Syracuse. At this place he was called to part with the companion of his joys and sorrows, who died February 4th, 1849. She departed this life in holy triumph, and agreeably to her dying request, she was buried in Lansingville, Tompkins County, N. Y.

In regard to this affliction Brother Phillips in his journal, remarks: "To me this was a gloomy event. How lonely the heart under such a bereavement! I had expended a great deal in the purchase of medicines, but nothing could arrest the progress of that fatal and flattering disease, consumption. It had its course, and completed its dreadful work. Though this was a year of trying affliction,

it was a year of some prosperity—a few converts and the church quickened and encouraged.”

Thus, while passing through the furnace of domestic affliction, our bereaved brother did not forget the work to which the Head of the Church had called him, but labored on, trying in all possible ways to bring souls to Christ. After the death of his wife, he gave up house-keeping, and boarded the remainder of the year in the family of Brother Edwin Brown, a most excellent official member of the church in Salina, of whom and whose family he speaks in the most affectionate and grateful terms. At the following conference, (1849,) Brother Phillips was returned to Salina. During the greater portion of this year he boarded in the family of Mr. Elmore Morse, a respected citizen of that place, of whom he also speaks most respectfully and affectionately. He had also a year of some prosperity spiritually and temporally, as they repaired and improved their church edifice.

On the 13th of June, 1850, just before the session of the conference, Brother Phillips ceased to be a widower by leading to the hymenial altar, Miss Sarah Osborn, of Herkimer, New York, daughter of Rev. Simeon Osborn, local preacher, and a man highly esteemed and respected in the community where he resided, not only for his talents, but his piety and benevolence. After his marriage, Brother Phillips attended the conference held in Rome, Bishop Waugh presiding, and received his appointment to Little Falls station, a village of considerable importance on the line of the Central Railroad and Erie canal, in Herkimer County. His immediate predecessor, Rev. Samuel Orvis, was exceedingly popular among the people, which rendered it more difficult for his successor, whoever he might be, to sustain himself; but Brother Phillips was equal to the task, and gave general satisfaction during the year.

The two following years, 1851–2, he labored on Newport Circuit with Rev. Ralph Fraser, as his junior colleague

During both years, they enjoyed glorious revivals of religion. Brother Phillips also labored faithfully to discharge a debt against the church property in Newport village. He spent several weeks abroad collecting funds and succeeded in paying a considerable portion of the same. During these two years, however, his health had perceptibly failed. Indeed, ever since his residence in Baldwinsville, where he had a severe attack of ague and fever, he, to use his own words, had not seen a well day, the fever having aggravated an old hereditary disease peculiar to his family, namely the gravel, of which disease his father had died. At the conference of 1853, held in Watertown, Bishop Simpson presiding, Brother Phillips had a severe attack of the disease above mentioned, by which he was confined to his room for several days. He was quartered at the house of Brother Jacob Hemingway, an old friend of his, who with his kind family made their guest as comfortable as possible. Feeling during the conference that his health would not admit of his taking a charge, he reluctantly applied for a superannuated relation which was freely granted by his brethren of the conference.

After conference he removed his family to Hanover, Cortland County, and occupied the premises formerly occupied by his respected father, who died in the Lord, June 21st, 1852, and who, with the mother, lies buried side by side in the peaceful grave-yard of that place, in hope of a blissful resurrection. From the time of his superannuation to the close of life, Brother Phillips forwarded to the conference the usual certificate required of those superannuated members, residing within the bounds of other conferences. It is needless to say that each of these certificates bore testimony to the undeviating Christian course of our dearly beloved brother in the ministry. At the conference of 1854, held in Camden, Brother Phillips was not present, on account of enfeebled health. At the following session, (1855,) it was his privilege to meet with and join in the deliberations of

his brethren. His anxiety to attend this conference was increased by the fact that the delegates to the general conference were to be chosen, and as the great question of anti-slavery was intimately connected with the choice of proper persons to represent the conference, he could not well deny himself the opportunity of being present and giving his vote for such. The result of the vote of the conference was the choice of Revs. A. J. Phelps, I. S. Bingham, G. Baker, F. H. Stanton, J. Erwin, H. Mattison and P. D. Gorrie as delegates.

At the following session of 1856, held in the city of Syracuse, Brother Phillips was present for the last time. Although the session was a stormy one, because of the defeat of the former editor of the *Northern Christian Advocate*, in his efforts to secure a relation by the general conference, and although he had many warm friends in the Black River Conference, who manifested their zeal in outspoken language in behalf of what they no doubt considered the right, yet Brother Phillips believing in the good intentions of the general conference, and assured of the integrity and piety of its members, calmly looked upon the storm as it passed without intermeddling in the strife. In this no doubt he acted wisely, while his constant desire and prayer was for Zion's peace. In relation to himself, he remarks: "My relation was continued—a superannuated man, truly! How cheering it would be were I in fact an effective man! What a blessing to my own soul, and I might hope it would be to others! But I must be contented with my lot as it is. I have had my day of active usefulness. How little did I think the peculiar condition of the superannuated while in my strength and vigor. Little did I read the feelings of the minister when laid aside from the active work. Still he can do something if he lives near to God, and walks circumspectly before the world."

At the conferences of 1857-8-9-60-61 and 62, our good brother was not present. The last entry in his journal is in

these words: "This year (1862) conference held its session at Oswego, in the East Church, so-called. Sent my usual certificate. Hope to be able yet to attend with my brethren of Black River Conference, for *I love them!*" But before another conference session our dearly beloved brother had ended his days in peace and Christian hope. He died in great peace, on Tuesday, February 17th, 1863.

He died in Cortland, N. Y., in the 58th year of his age. His funeral services were held in Cortland, and his remains conveyed to Herkimer for interment. His death was deeply lamented by hundreds, and even thousands, of those who had known him long and loved him well.

Brother Phillips was an able man, and an able preacher, richly endowed with gifts and grace and practical usefulness, which are the necessary disciplinary pre-requisites of every Methodist minister. But while some have these pre-requisites more, others have them in a less degree. Brother Phillips seemed to possess them in a more than medium degree, especially the first and last. In regard to talent, he was more than above the ordinary standard, and so in regard to his usefulness, if we measure usefulness by success, he was above many of his brethren in this respect. As to his piety, no one, most certainly no Christian, could doubt the piety of Benjamin Phillips. He was not only a Christian, but a Christian gentleman of fine appearance and cultivated manners, respected and beloved by all who formed his acquaintance. Except for his few years of superannuation, his loss from the ranks would have been more deeply and pungently felt, but time passing soothes many sorrows and accustoms us to endure evils that otherwise would be hard to bear.



REV. G.W. BARNEY.

CHAPTER XX.

REV. GODFREY W. BARNEY.

GODFREY WALDO BARNEY was born in Herkimer, Herkimer County, New York, September 18th, 1795. His father, Doctor Daniel Barney, moved from Rhode Island to Herkimer County in the previous year, and from thence to Rutland, Jefferson County, New York, about the year 1800; then to Adams, and from there to Henderson, in the same county. The Doctor was a practicing physician, but kept his family on a farm, and young Godfrey assisted his father in farm work during his boyhood days, and was a playmate of Charles G. Finney, the celebrated revivalist of subsequent years. During the war of 1812, young Godfrey joined the army as a private, and served for a short time in the 55th regiment of New York State militia, at Sackets Harbor, in 1814, and as a reward for his services in the army he subsequently received a warrant for forty acres of land, and still later, another warrant for 120 acres, and his widow now draws a pension of \$96 per annum from Government, on the same account. In 1819, he had an Ensign's commission granted him, which, however, he did not feel free to accept, as his hopes and intentions were directed to higher and nobler things than mere worldly glory. Besides, in those days it was the custom whenever an officer accepted a commission, that he "wet" his commission by treating his company all round with intoxicating liquor. This, young Barney could not conscientiously do, and would rather sacrifice his commission than violate conscience. Other reasons had their weight also.

In July or August, 1816, he was converted to God, in the town of Adams, while on horseback, returning from Water-

town to Henderson. It was about midnight. When near Smithville, while thinking deeply on the subject of his soul's salvation, and feeling himself to be a condemned sinner, his mind was directed to the cross, and, using his own language, "I saw Jesus Christ, and felt his love shed abroad in my heart, by the Holy Ghost, given unto me." He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, on trial, June 18th, 1818, and in full connection in due time. He was baptized by Rev. Luther Bishop, September 6th, 1818, at Henderson, and henceforth seemed to devote all his energies to the promotion of the cause of God, and was soon called by his brethren to occupy a prominent position on the walls of Zion.

He began preaching December 17th, 1826, in the Methodist Episcopal chapel, Wardwell Settlement, in Ellisburgh, having at this time a license to exhort. This his first public effort was on a Saturday afternoon, at a quarterly meeting, and by invitation of the presiding elder, who was present. His first license to preach was given at Rodman, February 24th, 1827, and signed by Goodwin Stoddard, presiding elder. At the same quarterly conference he was recommended as a proper person to join the traveling connection, and at the next session of the Genesee Conference, held in June, 1827, he was received on trial, and appointed to Potsdam Circuit, in St. Lawrence County. In 1828, he labored the greater portion of the year on Gouverneur Circuit, and in 1829 and 1830, on Malone Circuit, being, these years, connected with the Oneida Conference, which had been organized in 1828. In 1831, he was received into full connection, and was ordained deacon by Bishop Soule on the 17th of July, 1831, at Lowville, N. Y. The year of his admission to full connection, he was appointed to Fort Covington Circuit, and the following year to Parishville Circuit. At the close of the latter year, he was ordained an elder in the church of God by Bishop Elijah Hedding, on the 29th of September, 1833, at Cazenovia, N. Y., and was stationed at Wadlington, St. Lawrence County. In 1834-5, he labored in

Carthage, where he rendered acceptable service, but at the close of his full term on that charge, his health having materially failed, he applied for and obtained a superannuated relation to the conference. This occurred at the first session of the newly-organized Black River Conference, which was held in Watertown in 1836. During the years of his superannuation, he labored a portion of the year 1847 on Henderson charge, and the following year, 1848, he took an effective relation again, and was stationed at Brownville, near Watertown, where he labored during the year, but his health continuing to fail, he went back again to the superannuated list at the next conference of 1849.

It is proper to remark, that before entering upon the active duties of the ministry, in 1827, he had somewhat prepared himself, by a thorough course of mental training by attendance at the higher seminaries of learning, for the proper discharge of the duties of the ministry, and also by teaching in the common schools of the state, and we have before us papers signed by principals of academies, inspectors of schools, and trustees of districts, where he had successfully taught for consecutive terms, all recommending him highly as a student and teacher. During the year 1832, he was married in Bombay, N. Y., to Miss Lorinda Wilder, of the same place, and here it will be in place to say that three sisters of the same family married Methodist ministers, and one, Betsy, married a "Christian" minister, who for many years lived in the town of Potsdam, namely, Rev. Ira Allen, a man of undoubted piety and superior gifts as a preacher, and who for many years exercised a weighty influence for good through all the northern region of New York. He will long be remembered by the older inhabitants of the county.

Miss Arvilla Wilder was the wife of Rev. John Loveys, of precious memory, whose biography is written in the "Black River Conference Memorial." She subsequently became the wife of Rev. Joseph H. Lamb, which happy union, we

trust, will be continued for many years to come. Miss Nancy Wilder was the wife of Rev. John Lawrey, formerly a member of the Black River Conference, but since deceased. As we before stated, Brother Barney was married in Bombay. Here, during the previous year, he had secured the erection of the first Methodist chapel in the county of Franklin, and it was a matter of strong desire with him to be married in this edifice. His intended wife was then a student in the old St. Lawrence Academy, located in the beautiful village of Potsdam, where, partly on the same old site, rise the imposing buildings of the New York State Normal School, and as the former institution had sent forth hundreds of well-educated students to adorn all parts of the land, so the latter is engaged in scattering well-educated teachers to all parts of our common country.

But to return : Brother Barney and Miss Wilder were married in the aforementioned chapel, at the love feast on Sabbath morning, September 30th, 1832, in the presence of nearly a thousand persons, by the Rev. Squire Chase, presiding elder of the district. Sister Barney bore all the privations and hardships of an itinerant life, and now in green old age survives her partner and resides with her son, a celebrated lawyer in Wonenoc, Wisconsin.

Sister Barney was the daughter of Peter and Polly Wilder, and was born in Vermont, but came to St. Lawrence County with her parents, whom the author knew well in after years—both being members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the bounds of his charge, which included the place of their residence in Stockholm. He also had the melancholy duty to perform of officiating at the funeral of Mrs. Wilder, after her decease.

From a perusal of the preceding pages relating to the labors of Brother Barney, it will be inferred by the reader that his health was feeble during the greater part of his itinerant life. Such, indeed, was the fact, and especially during the years of his superannuation. In 1836, while

preaching at Carthage, and while delivering a sermon, he was the subject of an abdominal rupture, which prostrated him for the time being, and compelled him to keep inside of his house. It was shortly after this that he superannuated. Another physical difficulty overtook him during the latter years of his appearance on the floor of the conference—that is deafness. He could not hear what was being said in the pulpit, the altar, or on the floor of the house, without the aid of an ear trumpet, which he now always carried with him, and which afforded him only partial relief. This deafness continued during life.

After being laid aside we find the following entry in his journal: "It seems poor business for a Methodist preacher to be helpless unless he have funds of his own. But my sufferings are light in comparison with what others have suffered to bring the gospel to me. I speak in reference to our fathers, most of whom have gone to their reward." He resided during the years of his superannuation at Carthage, Henderson and Belleville, until the year 1858, when he removed with his family to Wisconsin. After traveling considerably through the state in search of a proper location, he finally settled in Wonenoc, Juneau County, on a new farm. He was at this time sixty-three years old, and feeble in health, but by the help of his two sons, now 16 and 18 years of age, who labored on the farm and taught school and practiced surveying for the settlers, they obtained a comfortable livelihood, and soon had a pleasant home, while Brother Barney himself preached and labored in the ministry as his strength would allow. Being also somewhat of a medical student, he was frequently called upon to visit the sick, and prescribed for their complaints. In May, 1863, while on a visit to a sick soldier, some two miles away, he caught a severe cold, which rapidly assumed the form of *pleuro pneumonia*, and carried him off in a few days to his final rest, notwithstanding all the care and attention an anxious wife could bestow, and the use of remedies pre-

scribed by a skillful physician; but all without effect. His frail body finally yielded to the power of the disease. In one of his sinking spells his wife asked him if he wanted to die? He calmly replied, "I would rather live than die, if it is God's will." "Is Jesus precious to you?" He replied with emphasis, "Oh, yes; and has been for more than forty years."

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. H. V. Train, of the West Wisconsin Conference, on the Thursday after his death, which occurred May 12th, 1863. In the course of his remarks he said that "the deceased was the first Methodist preacher he ever listened to; that he was the instrument, under God, of his conversion, and had administered to him the ordinance of baptism." Brother Train was brought up in St. Lawrence County, New York, and was converted during the early ministry of Brother Barney. After the funeral services his remains were deposited in the cemetery in Wonenoc, where they lie in peaceful slumber awaiting the resurrection of the just.

We will close this chapter by adding the following lines verbatim, as given by the excellent lady who had lived with him so long, as his companion in joy and sorrow:

"I wish to add that although my husband was superannuated a long time, he never ceased to work for the interests of the church. He said his business was to preach the gospel, and would never entangle himself in secular business, so that he could be ready at any time to go into the regular work if called for, and his health would permit. In Carthage, after he had so far recovered as to be able to preach some, he had a regular appointment some ten miles from the village toward Antwerp, and formed a class which was afterward taken into some circuit. He used also to fill vacancies which would occur in the different churches in Carthage, and was instrumental in starting the old Methodist church in that place. Our members were not numerous nor wealthy, and it took quite a battle to get it started, but it was fully under way when we left, and Brother Reynolds came on the charge and carried it through. We

moved to Henderson, because my husband owned some land there, which he afterwards sold, and bought a house and lot in Belleville. Here we had the privilege to educate our elder children in Union Academy, which, (years before while teaching school in this place,) my husband assisted to get up. He was secretary of the organization, and I have heard him say that his right hand did all of the writing connected with it, and the petitioning of the legislature for a charter.

"After the 'church south' seceded, and the dividends which used to be distributed to the conferences went to help pay for church property which they claimed, our income was very small, and my husband had to resort to various things to supply our wants. He compounded medicines, wrote legal documents such as deeds, mortgages, wills, etc., and obtained land warrants and pensions for the soldiers of 1812.

"And I have it to record that we were always comfortably fed and clothed. To be sure, industry and economy had something to do with it, but we believed in the providence of our kind Heavenly Father and received all as from him.

"After we came to this then new country, my husband preached a good deal. There was a new school-house very near us, but our catholic neighbors objected to having protestant meetings in it, and he, not wishing to have trouble with them, did not urge it, but preached in our large new log house. After becoming acquainted with us, our catholic friends withdrew their objections, and we had preaching and a Sunday-school in the school-house. He also preached in this village and in an adjoining town."

Thus lived, labored and died Godfrey W. Barney, a true Christian hero, a noble example of a self-sacrificing, independent Methodist preacher, laboring with his own hands and brain to support himself and family; and so well succeeding in the work that his dear ones whom he has left behind can rise up and call him blessed. The author is not only under great obligations to the widow, Mrs. Barney, but to his son, H. W. Barney, Esq., an eminent lawyer in Wonenoc, Wisconsin, who being unmarried resides with his mother, and to Rev. Joseph H. Lamb, for facts and other information furnished for this work.

CHAPTER XXI.

REV. GEORGE H. SALISBURY.

REV. GEORGE H. SALISBURY, of the Black River Conference, was born in Brownville, Jefferson County, N. Y., December 27th, 1826, and died at Hermon, St. Lawrence County, N. Y., November 27th, 1863.

He was converted at a camp-meeting in Hannibal, N. Y., August 30th, 1851, and soon after joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He united in marriage with Miss Marietta H. West, of Pulaski, N. Y., May 30th, 1862. He joined the Black River Conference on probation in 1853, in Watertown. He was successively admitted into full membership, and to deacon's and elder's orders, and ordained as soon as the disciplinary limitations of time would allow. His fields of labor were successively: Collamer, one year; Palermo, one year; South Mexico, two years; Cleveland, one year; Rose, two years; Wolcott, two years; Hermon, one year and seven months.

Brother Salisbury was always acceptable and useful among his people, enjoying a rising popularity, and was generally instrumental on his charges in the conversion of souls.

Regularity and system were prominent characteristics of his method of life. He aimed at constant progress and improvement in his pulpit labors; hence, while he preached during his ministry 1,344 different times, he used 1,112 different texts.

His discourses were delivered with an elevation of language and solemn earnestness which commanded the admiration of his hearers. Soon after his removal to Hermon his health failed, and for the most part of the year he was able to preach but once on the Sabbath. At the close of the year, however, his official board unanimously requested his return, preferring to retain him in view of his superior pulpit

talents, notwithstanding his poor health, to the risk of a change.

He preached but once the second year, when his health completely failed. After protracted sufferings, he died in great peace, with a holy joy radiating from his eye, and a placid smile upon his manly face. He rests from his labors, and his works do follow him. May his Godly mantle fall upon his brethren still toiling in the ranks.

The author has transferred the above from the annual minutes of 1864, to these pages, having no better source of information than what is found in the same. And here allow the compiler to observe that our conference minutes are invaluable as books of reference, and should be more highly prized by, and more generally circulated among, and preserved carefully by our people than what they are, as each small pamphlet which costs but a few cents, contains from year to year, in the most condensed and comprehensive form possible, the records relating to every minister and every charge in the conference.

From the Conference Memoir, as above given, the reader will perceive that our departed Brother Salisbury was no ordinary man ; he lived and labored and died as a true Christian minister should live and labor, and as he may expect to die when life's toils are over. Though dying at the early age of thirty-six years and eleven months, his memory is embalmed in the hearts of thousands who will look back upon the days of old and reflect upon the happy seasons enjoyed with, and the pious instructions given by this young and talented minister, who has, as it seems to us, been prematurely removed from our midst. But what is loss to us is heaven's gain.

“ Thus star by star declines,
Till all are passed away,
As morning high and higher shines,
To pure and perfect day ;
Nor sink those stars in empty night—
They hide themselves in heaven's own light.”

CHAPTER XXII.

REV. ELI W. R. ALLEN.

WE regret that fuller data of the life and labors of this somewhat eminent minister of the gospel have not been put into the possession of the author. That he had a record, and a good one, yea, even a bright and shining one, there remains no doubt in the minds of those who were his contemporaries, and especially of such as were his fellow-laborers in the ministry of the gospel.

The place of his birth we cannot give, but he was born during the year 1798, and when he was twenty-seven years of age, he joined the Genesee Conference on trial, at its session of 1825, and was appointed to Steuben Circuit, in Oneida County, N. Y. The Genesee Conference at that time embraced all the territory in the state of New York now covered by the Genesee, East Genesee, Central New York and Northern New York Conferences. He remained at Steuben two years. He was received into full connection in 1827, and appointed to Westmoreland—in 1828–9, to Little Falls. In 1830, he became a member of Oneida Conference, and was appointed to Palatine Bridge; in 1831–2, to Marcellus; in 1833, to Syracuse; in 1834–5, to Sandy Creek. In 1836, he became a member of Black River Conference, and was appointed to Herkimer; in 1837–8, to Rome; in 1839, to Camden; 1840, to Vienna; 1841–2, to Marcy. In 1843, he was superannuated; appointed in 1844–5, to Drew station; 1846–7, to Cleveland; 1848–9, to Liverpool. From 1850 to 1863, he was superannuated. Died in Amber, March 3, 1864, in great peace, aged 66 years.

From the above brief record of his labors, it appears that Brother Allen labored twenty-four years as an effective minister, and during his connection with the conference, he was

on the superannuated list fifteen years—thirty years in all. It will also be noticed that on eight of the charges he served, he was returned the second year, hereby furnishing evidence of his fitness for the work to which he had been called by the great Head of the Church.

As we now remember our long since deceased brother, he was a man of superior talents as a preacher and orator. His style of oratory was of the ornate kind, highly decorated with flowers and blossoms, which always pleased, and sometimes amused his audiences. He was an indefatigable worker, especially in the enterprise of church building. If a church edifice was needed, he always found some way to secure its erection, however poor or unable to build the society might be. We remember well the deep interest he took in the erection of a church or chapel in Oriskany. The society was small, and composed mostly of poor people—operatives in the factories of that village. They needed a chapel, and a chapel they should have. Brother Allen went to New York city, and secured some subscriptions from different merchants, but the largest from the late somewhat celebrated and eccentric Daniel Drew, the great New York financier. Out of gratitude to the donor, he styled the chapel “Drew Chapel,” which name it long retained.

But the most active of men must yield at last to nature’s dread decree, and it will ever remain a truth that

“The busy tribes of flesh and blood,
With all their hopes and fears,
Are carried downward by the flood,
And lost in following years.”

Brother Allen died peacefully, after having served the church of his choice for over thirty years to the best of his ability, and although but little is known of him by the generation that has come upon the stage of active life since his active life closed, no doubt many will be able to rise in the day of eternity, who, brought to Jesus through his instrumentality, will call him blessed!

CHAPTER XXIII.

REV. BROWNING NICHOLS.

OUR Brother Nichols was somewhat advanced in years when he united with the Black River Conference on trial as a traveling preacher. This occurred in 1853, in Watertown. At this time he was fifty-four years of age. He had proposed to join the conference some years previously, but his age was an objection on the part of a majority of the conference, and although all who knew him personally or by reputation, respected and loved him, many doubted the policy of admitting aged men to the conference while so many younger men were offering themselves for the work of the ministry. In the absence of more extensive information we insert the Mennoir adopted by the conference soon after his decease :

“Rev. Browning Nichols was born August 9th 1799, in the state of Rhode Island. Early in life he removed to the state of New York, and about the year 1817, was united in marriage to his now bereaved companion. Brother Nichols embraced religion, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the fall of 1830. About the year 1834, he was licensed to preach, and soon became an esteemed preacher, and was frequently employed as a supply on different circuits. At the session of the Black River Conference at Watertown, in June, 1853, he was received on trial, and appointed to South Butler. He served successively, with zeal and usefulness, the following charges : In 1854-5, Three Mile Bay ; 1856-7, Natural Bridge ; 1858-9, Cicero ; 1860-61, Durhamville ; 1862, Steuben. At the session of the conference at Watertown, in April, 1863, he was stationed at Phoenix, N. Y., where he labored very efficiently and successfully. He was greatly beloved by the people, and they were confidently expecting his services another year. But alas ! he was suddenly removed from their midst. He closed his useful life and labors on the morning of the 1st of April,

1864. He fell asleep sweetly and triumphantly, trusting in the merits of the atonement.

Servant of God, well done,
Thy glorious warfare's past;
The battle's fought, the victory's won,
And thou art crowned at last."

From the above brief obituary notice, it will be seen that although advanced in life when he became connected with the conference, he nevertheless gave eleven years of honest, active service to the itinerancy and the cause of his divine Master, in addition to nearly a twenty years' faithful service as a local preacher.

As it regards theology and the distinctive doctrines of Methodism, Brother Nichols was a well-informed man. He did not pretend to aspire to the higher branches of literature and modern science, but had a passable knowledge of the conference course of study, which in no case may be dispensed with, even when candidates are advanced in years. He was a man of deep piety, a man of prayer, full of faith and entirely devoted to the great work of saving souls, and the eagerness with which the people listened to the word of life as dispensed by him, and the often repeated requests that he should be returned to the charges he had so faithfully served during the preceeding year, proves that he was no second or third-rate preacher or pastor. But he was suddenly removed from his sorrowing people and the brethren of the conference. He died with the harness on, with his armor all bright and glistening, and has gone to enjoy "the rest that remaineth to the people of God."

"Life's labor done as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies,
While heaven and earth combine to say—
How blest the righteous when he dies!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

REV. FRANKLIN HAWKINS.

WE can only give a brief notice of the life and labors of this lamented brother, the want of reliable data being the only reason for this brevity. More would we give if we had more, but being confined to the mere routine reports of the conference proceedings as found in the annual minutes, we are necessarily limited in our remarks and in the length of this chapter.

Franklin Hawkins was born in the town of Poultney, Vermont, on the 4th day of May, 1810. He resided with his parents in the above town until the year 1816, when the family removed to East Schuyler, Herkimer County, New York. In the latter place young Hawkins was converted and brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, in the year 1828, when he was eighteen years of age. At what time or under what circumstances he was called to the ministry of the word, the author has no knowledge. He, however, after his conversion, united with the Methodist Episcopal Church and remained identified with its interests during the remainder of his highly useful life.

At the first session of the Black River Conference, held in Watertown in the year 1836, Brother Hawkins was received on trial in the traveling connection, and was appointed to Lowville charge. From the time of his first connection with the conference, he was a young man of more than ordinary promise, as may be inferred from the nature of his first appointment, Lowville being even in that early day a place of some importance. The author had the privilege of being a conference class-mate of Brother Hawkins, having joined the conference the same year, and pursued the same course of study, and undergone the same examinations until admitted into full connection, and subsequently to the

full orders of the ministry, and from personal recollection the author is prepared to endorse the high estimation in which he was held by the bishop and his cabinet. He served the Lowville charge one year, and at the next conference held in Potsdam, was continued on trial and appointed to Herkimer. On both of the above charges, he labored efficiently and successfully. In 1838, he was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Hedding, and stationed at Canastota, where he labored one year. The following year, 1839, he was appointed the second time to Herkimer, and in 1840, he was ordained elder by Bishop Roberts, at the conference held in Pulaski, Oswego County, New York, and re-appointed to Herkimer. In 1841, he labored in Brunswick, where he preached one year. In 1842, he was sent to the extreme north part of the conference, namely, Chataugay, where to the author's knowledge, he labored successfully for two years. In 1844-5, he labored on Bucksbridge Circuit, enjoying two good years. In 1846-7, he was pastor of the South Canton Circuit, and had two years of prosperity—thus having spent six years of his ministerial life in the northern, and in those days, somewhat dreaded portion of the conference—dreaded by many of the preachers from the central and southern portion of the state, many of whom imagined that it was a rough and sterile soil, literally and spiritually. Whether Brother Hawkins belonged to this class when he first was sent north, we know not, but at the close of his six years' service, he was heard to say that he had never enjoyed six happier years of his life than while laboring in that portion of the work. In 1848-9, he labored on Marcy Circuit, in the southern portion of the conference, and in 1850, at Newport, which proved to be the last year of his effective life. At the conference of 1851, his health having seriously declined, he was under the necessity of taking a superannuated relation, which he sustained until his decease which occurred in Herkimer, July 2d, 1864.

After his retirement from the active work, the author lost

sight of Brother Hawkins, and the more so as he himself from ill health had to retire from active service the previous year, and remained so retired during the life time of Brother Hawkins, and to the time of this present writing.

His memoir as published in the conference minutes of 1865, speaks of him as follows: "Brother Hawkins was an earnest Christian, a man of faith, and eminently useful. He was an able minister of the New Testament and when compelled by reason of infirmities to retire from the regular work, retained the spirit of the gospel, and maintained his Christian and ministerial character to the last."

Having frequently heard Brother Hawkins preach, the author is prepared to say that he was more than an ordinary preacher. No congregation could well go to sleep under his ministrations. He was very forcible and yet terse in the use of language, and withal comprehensive and without ambiguity. His sermons were always short and pointed. He stopped when he got through with his subject on hand, without circumlocution or an attempt to lengthen out his remarks for the sake of preaching a sermon of just such a length, so that he generally left his congregations hungry for more of the bread of life, rather than loathing what had been set before them, and to this trait in his character or manner is to be attributed, in part, his success as a preacher.

In social life he was frank and genial, always ready to administer grace to the hearer by reproof or condemnation when necessary. While laboring on Chateaugay Circuit, there was a member of his charge who was somewhat noted for his penuriousness and unwillingness to bear his share of the burdens of the church. One day Brother Hawkins called upon him at his residence, asking a contribution for missions or some other benevolent object. The member positively refused to give a cent, but began to rail against other leading members of the church. His pastor reproved him mildly by stating that he ought not to find fault with those men who were the pillars of the church, but desirous

of finding some excuse for not giving, he continued his tirade of abuse against the brethren. At length Brother Hawkins turned upon him, and calmly said, "Brother A——, don't you know that people talk against you as badly as you talk against these brethren?" "Why no! What do they say about me?" "They call you a great hog!" This reply silenced the man, if it did not open his pocket.

Brother Hawkins died, aged 54 years, in the 28th year of his ministry, and we regret to say, by his own hand, while laboring under a severe attack of insanity, hereditary or otherwise. But having lived well, we have no doubt of his safe passage to the skies.

CHAPTER XXV.

REV. JUSTIN T. ALDEN.

AMONG those heralds of the cross who have taken their upward flight from the midst of their ministerial brethren on earth, few have gone leaving a more precious remembrance of their virtues behind, than the subject of this sketch.

Justin T. Alden, son of Brother Rufus Alden, and brother of Rev. Byron Alden, was born in Hinesburgh, Vermont, January 21, 1821. In early life his parents removed to St. Lawrence County, N. Y., and settled on a farm near the present village of Nicholville. His father and mother were both of them godly and pious people, and will long be remembered for their zeal and holy living. As might have been expected of them, they brought up their "children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and at the early age of thirteen he gave his heart to God and became a mem-

ber of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with which his parents were connected. In his childhood days he received a good common school education, and after his conversion he took advantage of the facilities afforded by the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary to advance his education. At the age of eighteen, he received license to exhort, and two years afterward, his brethren, perceiving that he was evidently called to the work of the ministry, gave him license to preach the gospel. Shortly after receiving license to preach, he was duly recommended to the Black River Annual Conference as a proper person to travel and preach, and being well known to many of the elder members as a young man of more than ordinary promise, he was most cordially received on trial—a process which all have to submit to in our conferences as a pre-requisite to membership, even if they possess the talents of an angel. Accordingly, in the year 1842, we find this boy taking his appointed place among his brethren, ready to go wherever the authorities should decide.

He was appointed as junior preacher to Lysander Circuit, with Rev. Loren L. Adkins as preacher in charge. The lay brethren received their preacher gladly, and working and coöperating together, they enjoyed a year of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. In 1843, he was continued on trial, and appointed to Rose Circuit, as junior preacher, in connection with Rev. Rowland Soule as senior preacher. On this charge these two brethren labored very successfully together during the year, and won many souls to Christ. At the next conference held in Potsdam, in 1844, Brother Alden was received into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Hamline, and stationed on Louisville Circuit, in St. Lawrence County. On this circuit he served as preacher in charge, and although alone, yet in connection with two local preachers on the charge, especially that old and well-tried veteran of the cross, Elder Levi Miller, he labored successfully during the year. Being somewhat feeble in health at

the next conference, he took a supernumerary relation, and was appointed to Hopkinton* Circuit, with Josiah Arnold as preacher in charge. At this point, will the kind reader allow a digression? In our Conference Records we use the terms *superannuated* and *supernumerary* in a technical sense only. A person but partially acquainted with our economy would suppose that the former term applied only to those who are disqualified by old age for the active duties of the ministry, and the latter to one who is not needed to fill up a necessary number, indicating that there must be a surplus of preachers in any given conference where supernumeraries are spoken of. In neither of these senses are those words used by us. A superannuate among us is a preacher so much worn out in the service as to unfit him for the full discharge of his ministerial functions. He may be eighty years old, or he may be twenty, but if unfit for labor, he by vote of the conference takes a superannuated relation, but still remains a member entitled to all the privileges of an effective minister. A supernumerary is one who is not entirely worn out, or unfit for service, but only partially so, and may or may not have an appointment or charge. We think that most of our readers, who are not acquainted with the inner workings of our church, would consider the above two terms as misnomers in some cases, and as inappropriate in their application. Now, Brother Alden was made a supernumerary—that is a preacher that we had no need of, and yet he received an appointment! Would it not be better for the general conference in its wisdom to change these terms for others that will be better understood by those not posted in our technicalities of language?

To return to our subject: At the conference of 1846 he

*Although appointed by the Bishop to Hopkinton, his appointment was afterward changed to Nicholville, the residence of his father. So also in 1847, though sent to Bangor Circuit, he confined his labors to Moira, the adjoining town, while Bangor, on the same charge was otherwise supplied.

was made effective and appointed to Bangor, (Moirs,) where he preached during the following year, 1847. In 1848, he received his appointment to Bucksbridge, a pleasant charge on the Grass River, lying mostly in the town of Potsdam, having a neat but small church edifice, where he spent two very pleasant years. In 1850, he was appointed to Brasher charge, on the St. Regis River, in St. Lawrence County, and in 1851-2, he labored at Massena, the site of the justly celebrated Massena Springs, where he enjoyed the benefit of the healing waters. In 1853, he was stationed in Malone village, an important station in Franklin County. At the conference of 1854, he was appointed agent of the Black River Conference Tract Society, with headquarters at Watertown. The conference at its previous session of 1853 had taken advanced ground in relation to the circulation of our church literature, and the successes of the year encouraged the conference at its present session, 1854, to take a step in a further advance, by requesting the Bishop to appoint Brother Alden to the special charge of the important work of directing and otherwise providing for the more general circulation of our book-room publications, and the effort was not made in vain, but a new impetus was given to the work of scattering the literature of the church among the people within our bounds. He, however, made it his home at Nicholville during the year.

In 1855, Brother Alden was again appointed to Bucksbridge charge, where he had labored some years previously with great pleasure to himself and profit to the people, and at the ensuing conference of 1856 was returned to the same charge, thus showing the high estimation in which the people held him as a Christian minister and pastor. It is proper here to observe that during these two years he was greatly assisted in his work by the veteran supernumerary, Rev. Almanzo Blackman, whose residence was within the bounds of the charge, and who still lives to a good old age to bless the church and the community where he resides. In 1857,

he took charge of the station at Nicholville, having for his assistant and co-laborer in the work another veteran of the cross, namely, the Rev. Seymour C. Goodell, a supernumerary preacher, the author at that time being presiding elder of the district, and enjoying frequently the society and hospitality of these good men and their kind families, whose many acts of kindness will long be remembered. In the year 1858, the subject of this sketch was stationed at Mexicoville, a large and important village in Oswego County, from which he was transferred at the next conference of 1859 to Camden District, as its presiding elder, on which he labored for two years, but which, in 1861, he was obliged to relinquish in consequence of failing health, and accept a superannuated relation to the conference. The next year, however, (1862), having somewhat recuperated his strength, he was restored to the effective ranks, and stationed again at Mexicoville, where he remained one year, and in 1863-4 was the pastor of Camden station.

In the early part of the latter year, while our armies were in the field, and many of the sick and wounded were lying either on the battle ground or in the hospitals, the Christian commission issued its invitation for nurses and chaplains to serve in the front in aid of the sick and dying. Many of our preachers volunteered for this good work—some from the Black River conference, and among them our dear Brother Alden. Though somewhat feeble himself, his patriotic heart could not withstand the call thus made, but urged on by the demands of duty and humanity, he went to the field of blood and carnage. In his diary was found written the following extracts, copied by his old friend, the Rev. Arzar J. Phelps, and furnished by him for the columns of the *Northern Christian Advocate*:

He says, under date of July 26, 1864: "I took leave of my dear family, this morning to be gone, if well, six weeks or more on a mission to the army, under the direction of the Christian Commission. I go accompanied by Rev. J. H.

Buck, Rev. S. F. Kenyon and Brother R. Paddock. I go with the prayer that God may make me useful; that it may tend greatly to increase my spiritual strength; that I may be permitted to return in health; that my family may be preserved during my absence, and that I may, on my return, be better than ever prepared to labor efficiently and successfully in the vineyard of the Lord. God of mercy and might! keep, defend and save me, and let me in life and in death show forth thy praise, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour."

July 29th: "The air is warm and sultry, and may perhaps prove very exhausting, but I will trust in the mercy and grace of the Most High. He, I know, is able to protect and bless. He will do me good, and not ill."

August 4th: "Twenty-three years ago this day I was married. Our wedded life has been pleasant. God has given us three dutiful and kind children who yet live, and one who has passed away to her home in heaven. Oh, may the Blessed Saviour be our only trust, and bring us all finally to the glorious land."

At a later date, under some physical suffering, he says:

"It does seem to me that I feel in my heart to say, 'In all the Lord's ways, Thy will, oh God, be done. I feel anxious to know any duty and do it. Oh, I want the spirit of Christ. I want to appear in his likeness. Oh, Jesus, make me all Thine own, saved, *saved* by grace.' For the sake of my family I desire to live. It seems to me they greatly need my care. If I can but be a faithful, successful minister of the cross, I desire to live, that I may preach the gospel. Oh, Lamb, let me know the length and breadth and depth and height of Jesus' love."

It became very evident to our dear brother that his days were being numbered. On the 22d day of August he became seriously ill, and later in the week his dear wife arrived upon the scene to administer to his comfort, and on Friday, the 26th of the same month, he, in company with his wife and physician, started for his northern home, which they reached on the following Monday morning, just in time to spend a few brief hours with his family, when, on the evening of the same day, Monday, the 29th of August,

1864, he calmly passed away to the better land, leaving his blessing to his weeping family, and dying in the midst of his friends, at the early age of forty-three, and the twenty-third year of his ministry. His last words were : "Peaceful, peaceful, oh, how peaceful!"

Brother Alden was one of the loved ones of earth. No one could become intimately acquainted with him without loving him. Such was his humility and apparent honesty, his openness of countenance and sterling integrity, that few could become familiar with him without taking him at once into their confidence and affection. As to learning, he was a good scholar. He made but little pretention to classic lore. He was not a collegiate, nor even a graduate, so far as we know, of any seminary of high reputation, but he was a well read man, both as it regards theology and natural science, and we may here observe that while many persons may have formed an opinion that any one can enter the Methodist ministry with little or no preparation, if they will take the trouble to examine, closely and critically, our conference course of four years' study, they will, we think, acknowledge that no man who masters, in its length and breadth, this course, can, at its completion, be an *ignoramus*. True, he may not be fitted to become president of a college, or chancellor of a university, but he may be an able preacher and expounder of God's holy Word ; he may be an excellent disciplinarian and faithful pastor of the flock committed to his care ; he may be a son of consolation to some or a son of thunder to others, fulfilling the high and holy duties of his mission to humanity, and successfully leading men from sin to the cross. Brother Alden, we repeat, was a good scholar, and well adapted to and well qualified for the duties of the ministry.

His amiability of character all acknowledged who knew him. Like the young man in the gospel, who came to the blessed Saviour, enquiring what good thing he should do that he might have eternal life, it is said : "Jesus loved

him," not because of his imperfections, but for his frankness, his reverence, his humility, his anxiety, his sincerity, the Saviour loved him, and would have saved him, but he went away sorrowful—not so our departed brother. He brought all to the feet of Jesus, and the Saviour loved him and received him, and gave him eternal life even on earth—knowledge of himself as his Saviour—as the Jesus who God had sent.

Brother Alden was a good preacher. His sermons were well studied and fitly arranged, so as to give a position to all. He was no ranter nor mere declaimer, but calm and logical and at times eloquent, he commended the truth to every man's conscience, and enforced the precepts of the gospel with a warm and fervent appeal to the judgment of his hearers. As a pastor, he was diligent in looking after the interests of his flock, full of pity and sympathy for the woes and sorrows of any, and faithful in his reproofs of wrong-doing.

As a husband and father he was kind and affectionate. None loved him better or cherished his memory more than the dear ones he left behind. As a fellow laborer in the vineyard of our common master, the conference, of which he was so many years a worthy member, deeply deplored their loss, but are comforted by the reflection that our departed brother has only preceded them by a few years, and that they will greet him again in the land of spirits bright.

The author hereby tenders his thanks to his son, Mr. William W. Alden of Syracuse, for documents relating to his deceased father's history.



REV. A. CASTLE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

REV. ALLEN CASTLE.

THE subject of this chapter was born in the town of Alburgh, state of Vermont, on the 2d day of November, 1805. His parents were both pious, and they early consecrated their son to Christ and his church, in holy baptism, but soon were removed by death, leaving him an orphan on earth, while their ransomed spirits rose above the fleeting and changing scenes of this earthly inheritance to join in the songs of the redeemed around the throne on high.

In his youth he came to what was then known in Vermont as the "Black River Country." This is all the country west of the Chateaugay woods, from the Canada line to the Black River, in Jefferson County. At the age of eighteen, he became deeply impressed on the subject of experimental religion, and under the labors of Rev. Gardner Baker, he gave his heart to God, was soundly converted, and identified himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He soon evinced talents and powers of mind that qualified him to serve as an exhorter in the church, and having proved himself efficient in this capacity, he, in 1833, was licensed to preach, and he labored earnestly and faithfully as a local preacher for some three years, when feeling himself called to devote himself entirely to the work of the ministry, he offered himself to the traveling ministry, and at the first session of the Black River Conference, held in Watertown in 1836, having been duly recommended, he was received on trial as a traveling preacher.

This conference held as above stated, is memorable to the author, and to many others, not only as being the *first session*, but as being the time when a large class of young itinerants were received on trial: but alas! during

the forty-four years that have elapsed since that period, the most of those young active men have fallen asleep in death, or been otherwise disabled, so that only *three* remain as members of the conference, and of these all are superannuated, but while the laborers fall in death, or are otherwise disabled, the lord of the harvest raises up others to fill the vacant places and carry on the needful work.

After Brother Castle's reception on trial, in 1836, he was appointed by Bishop Waugh to Bangor Circuit, in Potsdam district, Rev. John Loveys being presiding elder. This circuit was a two weeks' circuit, and the preacher was expected to visit all the appointments once in two weeks. There were, if the author remembers correctly, some eight preaching places, so that, single-handed, he had all he could well do to fill his appointments. But Brother Castle was sufficient for the task, and labored faithfully and with some degree of success to the close of the conference year. At the conference of 1837, he passed a good examination and was continued on trial and sent to Chateaugay Circuit. Here he labored with great acceptability during the years 1837 and 1838. At the conference of 1838, he was received into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Hedding, and the same year, as already stated, was re-appointed to Chateaugay Circuit, where he completed his second year on that charge. In 1839 he was appointed to Hopkinton Circuit, in St. Lawrence County, where he also labored successfully two years. While Brother Castle was laboring on Hopkinton Circuit the charge embraced the large town of Stockholm, and was visited on one occasion by a Universalist minister, who preached in one of the churches in the west part of the town. Brother Castle thought it to be his duty to attend and listen to what the preacher had to say. The latter, seeing Brother Castle in the congregation, respectfully invited the latter into the pulpit, who was somewhat at a loss to know what duty was in regard to accepting the invitation. He at length consented to take a seat

with the reverend gentlemen, who selected for his text the words: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." As might be expected, he preached the whole world, good and bad, saint and sinner, into the kingdom of heaven. Brother Castle sat uneasy during the sermon, but what was his surprise on being called upon to make the closing prayer! He accepted the invitation, knelt down solemnly and prayed most earnestly and devoutly that at the last great judgment sermon none of the congregation might be found on the left hand among the goats.

At the close of his first year in Hopkinton he was ordained elder at the Pulaski Conference, in 1840, by the venerable Bishop Robert R. Roberts, and re-appointed to Hopkinton. In 1841-2, he received his appointment to Louisville Circuit, in the same county, the latter year Rev. Wm. H. Hawkins being the junior preacher. In the year 1843, he was sent to Victory Circuit, in Cayuga County. Here he labored more or less successfully for one year, with Isaac Hall as the preacher in charge, George Gary being presiding elder. In 1844, he received his appointment to Lee Circuit, Wm. Lawrence being his colleague as junior preacher, remaining a single year. In 1845, he became the preacher on Steuben Circuit, where he remained a year. In 1846-7, he traveled East Canada Creek Circuit, in connection with the late lamented J. B. Cocagne, as junior colleague. In 1848, he was appointed to New London, Oneida County, where he remained one year, and in 1849 was transferred to Mexico Circuit, filling the pulpit during two years. In 1851-2, he served the Clay charge, and 1853, the Syracuse mission, and 1854, the Victory Circuit, where he had been stationed some ten years previously. At the conference of 1855, he was sent to Gouverneur, in the northern part of the conference and the seat of the Conference Seminary, Rev. E. C. Bruce being the principal thereof. Here

Brother Castle remained two years. In 1857, he was stationed at Heuvelton, a small but enterprising village near Ogdensburg, filling a term of one year; and during the two following years, 1858-9, he traveled Three Mile Bay Circuit, 1860, Alexandria, 1861, South Richland, 1862-3, Parish Circuit, in Oswego County.

From the period of his joining the conference in 1836, Brother Castle had performed the work of a Methodist itinerant for 28 years, and having occupied fields of labor in nearly all portions of the conference territory, from the extreme north to the southern boundary, and from the east to the west. At the conference of 1864, held in Adams, he was so far debilitated and otherwise physically enfeebled that he had to take a superannuated relation, which he sustained during the few remaining months of his earthly pilgrimage.

In the absence of more particulars in regard to the last months of his hitherto active life, we can add to this short memoir nothing more than the one prepared for and adopted by the conference at its session in 1866 :

Memoir of Rev. Allen Castle.

“Rev. Allen Castle was born in Alburgh, Vt., November 2d, 1805. He was blessed with Christian parents, who early consecrated him to God, and soon after left him, by their departure to the Christian’s home above. At about eighteen years of age he was converted, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church under the labors of Rev. Gardner Baker. Having labored some time as an exhorter, in 1833, he was licensed to preach, and entered at once upon the active work of the ministry, which so fully engaged his heart and energies for the remaining part of his life. In 1836, he joined the Black River Annual Conference on whose record his name has stood for nearly a third of a century. He was at our last annual session in feeble health, and received a superannuated relation.

“Last autumn he was prostrated by fever, which for some time kept his friends in anxious suspense; but our worst fears were soon realized. On the 21st of October, 1865,



REV. J. C. VANDERCOOK, A.M.

our much esteemed and now lamented brother closed his mortal life.

"He died as the Christian dies, frequently expressing his faith and hope in Christ, in language like the following: 'Jesus is with me and all around me.' 'I am sure death will be gain to me.' At one time, the dying man of God raised his hands and exclaimed, 'Victory! victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb.' The last utterance of those lips which so long proclaimed the gospel of peace was, '*All is well*, ALL IS WELL!"

"Brother Castle was an earnest, devoted Christian; a faithful minister of the Lord Jesus; a kind husband; an affectionate father; a sincere and reliable friend; a loyal and patriotic citizen; a man who was loved most by those who knew him best.

"But he is gone. His place among us is now vacant. We shall see his cheerful face and hear his friendly voice no more on earth. Nor shall we again hear at our annual roll-call the familiar name of our worthy and dear Brother Allen Castle.

"Fulton, April 23, 1866.

L. D. WHITE,	{	<i>Committee."</i>
J. ERWIN,		
A. J. PHELPS,		

CHAPTER XXVII.

REV. JACKSON CORNELIUS VANDERCOOK.*

THE subject of this sketch was born in the town of Lyons, county of Wayne, state of New York, on the 3d day of August, 1814. His grand-parents, on his father's side, emigrated from Holland, and spoke the Lowland German and English languages. His mother was of English descent.

*The author hereby tenders his thanks to W. A. Vandercook, Esq., of Syracuse, son of the subject of this sketch, for placing at his disposal various letters, manuscripts, etc.

His father was a mill-wright by trade, which occasioned his frequent removal from place to place as the exigencies of his trade required, and when Jackson was some five or six years old his father died and left him an orphan upon the charities of the world, for his deceased parent left but little of the treasures of wealth to support his family, consisting of his bereaved widow and seven children. After providing for a few years, as best she could for the support of her dependent family, the mother re-married to a gentleman by the name of Wells, who was a pious God-fearing man, but somewhat austere in his manner and severe in his discipline. Soon after Jackson became a member of his step-father's family, he began to attend Sunday-school, and there he seems to have received his first permanent impression of the nature of man's fall and his restoration by divine grace, and those early impressions thus formed were not only lasting, but deep and operative in subsequent years, so that he would retire to the fields or forests and pour out his youthful soul to God in prayer.

At the age of nine or ten he began attending district school near his father's residence. He speaks in his autobiography with great respect and gratitude of his teachers in this school, particularly of Miss Abigail Bunce, who was a zealous and practical Christian, and who seems to have been successful in moulding the mind of young Jackson. A few years later his step-father removed with the family to the township of Huron, not far from the present village of Wolcott, New York. Here in 1828 his affectionate mother died in the triumph of faith. After his mother's decease, he began to have a longing desire for an education which hitherto had been somewhat neglected. At the age of seventeen he took his first lesson in arithmetic. This, with reading and spelling and a little knowledge of geography, constituted the sum of his literary acquirements. About this time he entered into the service of a gentleman in Lyons, New York, to learn the trade of a carriage maker, but be-

ing troubled with weakness of vision, he was soon obliged to leave this trade. After this he went from place to place laboring wherever an opening presented, and was necessarily called to associate more or less with the wicked and profane, but his early training, and the counsels and prayers of his departed mother had a redeeming and restraining effect upon his mind, so that he was saved from being swallowed up by the great maelstrom of vice into which thousands of others sank to perdition.

As the subject of this sketch neared the age of twenty-one he became deeply convicted of sin, so much so, as to be near the borders of despair and tempted almost to end his mental sufferings by a sacrifice of his own life. But after enduring for weeks the pain of hell, he resolved fully to obey the mandates of Jehovah, and at length light and joy filled his soul and he went forth to

“ Tell to sinners ’round,
What a dear Saviour he had found.”

From the moment that he found peace in believing, he forsook the associations of his young companions and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church and was baptized by sprinkling, by the Rev. Elijah Barnes. No sooner was he converted than his thirst for knowledge revived. He began to attend a select school, taught in the session room of the Presbyterian church in Wolcott, where he applied himself closely to study. After many changes of business and locations, as also teaching and being taught, we find him in 1838, a student in Genesee Wesleyan Seminary where he pursued the higher branches of English under the principalship of Rev. Schuyler Senger, and after the close of the term he returned to Wolcott and opened a select school, which he taught for two full terms with good success. About this time his attention was called to the subject of slavery, which was being agitated not only in the churches, but by political men, statesmen and others. Into the crusade against slavery Brother Vandercook entered heartily,

with great zeal and with which he was ever after identified. He also fully identified himself with the temperance reform, both in its general and local aspects, and drew upon himself no little amount of persecution from the rum-selling power, because of his advocacy of the truth.

In 1842, he was married to Miss Abby A. Wilmot, a young lady of accomplished manners and high intellectual attainments, a union which proved most happy in its immediate results and its future consequences. After his marriage, he removed to Warsaw, where he also taught a high school, boarding with his wife in the family of Rev. A. H. Tilton. After teaching several terms in Warsaw, he opened an academical school in Perry, which he taught for five terms with success. In 1846, he took charge of an academy in Towanda, Penn., which he taught for a number of years.

In the year 1848, having felt himself called to the work of the ministry, he gave his name to the Black River Conference, and by that body was received on trial in the traveling connection, and was appointed to the charge of South Canton Circuit, in St. Lawrence County, N. Y. Although but a tyro in the work of the ministry, he gave so much satisfaction to the good people of his charge, that he was at the next conference re-appointed, thus serving the full constitutional term of two years on his first charge. At the succeeding conference of 1850, held at Rome, he after due examination was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon by Bishop Beverly Waugh, and appointed to the village of Fort Covington, in Franklin County, which he served two years, and was at the next conference appointed to Gouverneur, in St. Lawrence County, serving one year. Gouverneur was the seat of the Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary, and while pastor of the church in this place, he enjoyed great opportunities for the exercise of his mental attainments, which were greatly appreciated by the faculty and students. At the close of his first year on this charge,

he was at the ensuing conference, held at Ogdensburg, N. Y., June, 1852, ordained elder by Bishop Thomas A. Morris, and returned for the second year to Gouverneur, where he labored efficiently and successfully.

At the following conference in Watertown, in June, 1853, Brother Vandercook was appointed on the committee on education, and at the close of conference was stationed in the city of Oswego, East charge, where he remained one year. In 1854, he was stationed at Fairfield, in Herkimer County, N. Y., the seat of Fairfield Seminary. The two following years, 1856-7, at Geddes, near Syracuse; the next two years in Fulton, Oswego County, having charge of one of the most important stations in the conference, and where he labored with great acceptability. In 1860 and 1861, he was appointed again to East Oswego, a fact which proves that his labors were not unappreciated in that city. The following years, 1862 and 1863, he filled the pastorate in Adams, Jefferson County, N. Y., and the following year, 1864, he served as financial agent of Falley Seminary, at Fulton. In 1865, he was appointed to Geddes station again, and as agent of Falley Seminary, which was his last appointment.

During all the eighteen years of his effective life, the nation was in a state of turmoil and strife. The two great antagonistic forces of slavery and intemperance on the one hand, and anti-slavery and temperance on the other, were arrayed against each other, and came in contact almost continually in the nation and in the churches of every protestant Christian denomination. Gospel ministers, of course, could not stand aloof from the contest. The times required an active participation in the strife, and but few, and only those of a highly conservative turn of mind, were able to refrain from engaging openly in the strife. Brother Vandercook was not one of those who could sit silently and see the fight go on. Though somewhat conservative in his make up as a man, his whole soul was aroused with indignation at the

abominations of slavery, and in the church of which he was a prominent minister, he raised his voice and wielded his pen in favor of the principles of freedom. Hence, also, he politically became fully identified with the "National Liberty Party," and remained true to his principles while life lasted. So, also, in regard to temperance, he was ever found at the front doing battle for the right. During the later years of his precious life, his residence was at Fulton, where he breathed an atmosphere peculiarly congenial to his moral nature, for he found a society, both in and out of the church, that could sympathize with him in his views and harmonize with him in his efforts to promote the mighty reforms so greatly needed in the above respects.

For some years Brother Vandercook's health had been visibly declining, and at the conference of 1866, he was under the necessity of asking for a superannuated relation, hoping that by resting for a year or more from the labors and trials of the itinerancy, he might be able to recuperate his exhausted and attenuated frame. His request was granted by his brethren of the conference, and so after a ministerial life of eighteen years he retired from the active work to assume that relation so much dreaded by him, and all other true Methodist preachers—the superannuated relation.

While stationed at Adams, he discovered the first symptoms of pulmonary disease. After the death of Rev. Justin T. Alden, of Camden, Brother Vandercook was asked by the presiding elder to supply the vacant pulpit until conference, which notwithstanding his failing health he endeavored to do, acting in the meantime as agent of the Falley Seminary. While filling his last appointment at Geddes his strength had so far failed that he was obliged to leave his work and take a trip to the West, hoping thereby to recuperate, but while on his journey and before reaching the terminus, his feebleness increased so fast that he felt impelled to retrace his steps and return at once to his home in

Fulton. The ensuing session of Black River Conference was held in that place, but our brother's strength was so far reduced and his system so emaciated that he found it impossible to attend its session. Indeed, before his return from his western trip, he had a premonition that his stay on earth was brief, and here in his letters to his friends at home, he freely alluded to his approaching end, and made arrangements for the settlement of his worldly affairs.

During the conference week he was visited at his house by many of his brethren in the ministry and laity, and among others by his dear and intimate friend, Rev. Hiram Mattison, who were like David and Johnathan in their mutual attachment. To show the strength of this attachment we take the liberty of inserting a letter written by Brother Mattison to Brother Vandercook, a few weeks before the death of the latter :

“JERSEY CITY, February 28th.

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER :

“I was very glad to receive yours of the 22d this morning, but sad to learn of your continued ill health. Most sincerely do I hope that your western trip will restore you to your former vigor.

“I am remarkably thin, and begin to show age rapidly. Have done a good work I think, since I came here, not only in the church but in completing my book the *‘Resurrection of the Body.’* * * * * Bishop Simpson, who has examined the manuscript, wrote me, saying, ‘I am well pleased with it, it is what we need.’ He is to write an *Introduction* for it—four pages only. The book is really elaborate, and I think thorough. A new edition of *‘Immortality’* is out and it is selling fast.

“If you are not back to conference at Fulton, I will not go. Am in doubt as to joining Newark Conference. I care nothing for conference relations any way. I work for Christ and his kingdom, whether in or out of conference. I expect to remain here at any rate. Everything is going well, and we are having quite a revival. I preach every night.

“Do not get low spirited. The Lord reigns. You are

one of his children, and all will be well. If you need money now, as I suppose your salary is stopped, let me know, and I will send you what you need—lent if you can repay it hereafter or otherwise, as circumstances determine. Trust in God as your best friend, and in me as your earthly friend. While I live and have anything to aid you with, you shall never need if you *are* disabled. Remember this as an offset against fear of want or embarrassment growing out of sickness * * * * I send you three papers. Mrs. M. sends her best love and sympathy. I fear you will *love* the West and be tempted to remain there.

“ Your Friend and Brother in Christ.

“ H. MATTISON.”

The above letter not only shows the degree of love and true brotherly affection existing between these two ministers of Jesus Christ, but it proves the open-hearted charity of the writer. Although Hiram Mattison was a man of words, both written and spoken, he at every opportunity displayed deeds as well as words—deeds of kindness and true charity, evinced to all, and especially to his brethren in the ministry, and more especially to his brethren in the Black River Conference. The author, although sometimes differing with him in regard to some of the leading questions of the day, ever loved Brother Mattison as a man, a Christian, a Christian minister and true friend. It is doubtful whether our greatest blessings are fully prized by us until they take their flight, and so with our brother. Notwithstanding all the honors conferred upon him year after year by the conference, we knew not his real worth until we lost him from our ranks by removal, and then by death. All honor to his memory !

But to return to the subject of our sketch. There lie before us a number of letters written to Brother Vandercook by ministers and laymen, all breathing the spirit of love and true Christian affection, which we would gladly transfer to these pages, did the limits of the work allow. But fearful that we may transcend the prescribed size of the volume, we are under the necessity of denying ourselves the pleasure

and our readers the opportunity of their perusal in printed form. Suffice it to say, that in addition to the letter from Brother Mattison, as herein published and on file, we find the names of J. B. Edwards, Esq., of Oswego; Rev. R. N. Barber; W. W. Porter, of Geddes, to his family; Rev. J. M. Parke; Rev. A. J. Phelps; Rev. D. S. Chase, and others, and in every one of them we find expressions of true Christian sympathy expressed for himself and family, all going to show that he was held in very high estimation by those who were so fortunate as to form his acquaintance and secure his confidence.

The Black River Conference closed its thirty-first session in Fulton on the 25th of April, 1866, during which session Brother Vandercook, as before stated, was unable to leave his room, but he was cheered by the presence of many of his most intimate brethren in the ministry and laity, and particularly Brother Mattison, who administered to his dying brother and friend, the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper. After the close of conference Brother Vandercook lingered along until Sabbath morning, the 27th of May following, when his frail body gave way to the assaults of the last enemy, and he departed this life in great peace, in glorious hope of a "better resurrection." He gently breathed his last expiring breath while sympathizing, weeping friends stood around his bed and sang the well known hymn:

"Let music cheer me last on earth,
And greet me first in heaven."

We avail ourselves of a portion of the report of the committee on memoirs, as adopted by the conference at its following session, held in Syracuse in 1867, omitting simply the record of his ministerial labors, which will be found in the preceding portion of this sketch:

"Brother Vandercook was justly ranked with our strong men. Possessing a vigorous and logical mind, well educated, versed in logic and mental and moral philosophy, and a profound thinker, his utterances were comprehensive

and impressive. He had a rare power of generalization, which in his sermons formed a basis of edifying thought and correct action long after the voice that bore them to listening ears was hushed.

"His sermons were not mere abstractions, but profound and penetrating expositions, faithfully applied to timely interests and present demands, and so directed as to concentrate pure and telling influences upon the future. Individuality was one of his very marked characteristics. He did not accept with passive credulity the dictum of men, but his convictions grew upon truths which a searching and thoughtful personal examination revealed as such, and were accordingly strong and unyielding.

"His was one of the minds which give allegiance to truth itself, rather than to its forms. In his estimation, certain forms might become effete, but the truth is eternal. Independent as a thinker, firm in his fidelity to the right as he understood it, he early espoused the cause of reform, especially in its relations to the anti-slavery movement, and was unfaltering in his faithfulness to it from the beginning to the end. There was often a grandeur in his expressions, while engaged in the great conflict of this reform. He was earnest in his efforts to promote the educational enterprises of the church and of the age. Whatever was of 'good report' found in him a firm friend and an unflinching advocate.

"In his personal religious life, he impressed those who knew him best as a man of God, and one who was rooted and grounded in the faith of Christ. His personal religious life was not, as strangers might have supposed, characterized by the coldness of intellect, but there was a warmth and sweetness and intensity which demonstrated a deep and abiding communion with Christ. Though intellectual, he was also emotional; and often in the social means of grace, and under the inspiration of spiritual song, he shouted aloud for joy. The impress of his character must be lasting upon his brethren, and his thoughts upon those brought under his teachings.

"A faithful Christian, true to his convictions of truth and duty no matter what the cost, a faithful friend, and an untiring advocate and defender of the humanitarian interests of the world, an able and approved minister of the gospel of Christ, a good pastor, a noble man—his memory must be enduring, and we are confident that it will be an hour of

peace and assurance with him when the Lord Jesus Christ sits upon the judgment seat. He has left a good testimony, and the church will write him among its choice names."

We cannot well close this chapter without adding the following tribute to his memory by his friend and brother, already referred to, the Rev. Hiram Mattison, since gone to his eternal rest, although there may be an almost unavoidable repetition in some parts of it. It was first published in the columns of the *Northern Independent* :

The late Rev. J. C. Vandercook, A. M.

"It is now some months since this devoted minister of Christ took his departure from time, and entered upon the scenes of the changeless world ; and as I have seen no extended notice of his death in any of our church journals, it may be my duty, as one of his many friends and admirers, to offer a brief public tribute to his memory.

"Brother Vandercook was born August 3, 1814, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1833, being then nineteen years old ; but did not unite with the conference until its session in Adams, in 1848. From this time onward he served the church on various charges for eighteen successive years, having been at South Canton, Fort Covington, Gouverneur, Oswego, Fairfield, Geddes, Fulton, Oswego a second term, Adams, agent of the Falley Seminary, and a second term at Geddes. With two exceptions, he was two years in each of these charges.

"While at Adams, he contracted a difficulty in his lungs, or, as he told me just before his death, he first noticed it there. While agent of the seminary, and supplying also the Camden station, after the removal of that man of God, Rev. J. T. Alden, by death, his lung difficulty increased, till at length, on the following year, he was obliged to leave his post at Geddes, and finally to exchange toil for rest, and sickness for eternal youth. When he found his health rapidly failing, he took a trip westward, in hope of improvement. His aim was, I believe, to have gone to Minnesota. But his feebleness arrested his progress, and he returned to Fulton. While at Hartland, Wisconsin, he wrote me, informing me of his condition, asking me to settle a small bill that he owed at the book room, and requesting me to meet him at the session of the conference, at Fulton, stating that it would

probably be the last visit we should ever have together in this world. I met him, as requested, and found him fast sinking into the tomb. At his request, several of his intimate friends met at his house, during the session of the conference, to receive, with him, the holy communion. Among them were Prof. Griffin and wife, and Brothers Hewitt, Lyon and Hosmer, and a more affecting scene I never beheld. Brother Vandercook seemed to be very happy, and we all felt that Christ, the conqueror of death, was there to disrobe him of all his terror.

"As I took his hand and kissed him, as I left for New York, he asked, with a look that I can never forget, '*Won't you come up, if I pass away?*' Of course I answered that I would; and on the 7th of May, he wrote his last letter to me, asking me to attend and preach at his funeral.

"His end was what might have been expected, tranquil and peaceful. A short time before his death, he said to Brother Cole, as the lightnings were flashing, and the thunders rolling through the heavens, 'Would it not be glorious to depart in such a storm as this?' He seemed to have an idea of mounting above the storm-charged clouds, while the sound of celestial artillery grew fainter and fainter as he ascended to the heavenly paradise.

"As his end drew near, his sufferings were great, but singing seemed to soothe his distress. He said to Prof. Griffin, 'Sing the hymn,

' O I want to cross over.'

"In the same manner, he dictated four other hymns:

' On the banks beyond the stream.'

' Rest for the weary.'

' Let me go.'

and—

' O sing to me of Heaven.'

While these verses were being sung, he seemed to feel no pain, and as they ceased singing the verse,

' Let music cheer me last on earth,
And greet me first in heaven,'

they looked toward him, and he was dead! Thus ended the labors and sufferings of another of God's faithful servants and ministers.

"Brother Vandercook was a conscientious and good man. Though he said, in reference to his funeral, 'Tell Brother Mattison not to choose an eulogistic text, or preach an eulo-

gistic sermon ;' and I feel the influence of this request upon me now, as I write ; yet I *must* commend the excellencies of his character, or remain altogether silent. His attainments in science and the languages were respectable, while in logic, and mental and moral philosophy, he was well versed. As a preacher, he was more solid than showy. He was earnest in every good work—education, Sunday-schools, temperance and anti-slavery, and that, too, when it was a reproach to be known as an 'abolitionist,' and an active enemy of slavery, in church and state. It was he who wrote the almost prophetic utterance, in reference to the general conference at Buffalo, in 1860, which was placed as a motto upon the title page of 'The Impending Crisis.'

" 'This will be the last opportunity that God's true servants will ever have to restore the M. E. Church to her original character, and preserve her honor in the grandest moral conflict of the age.'

"And true enough, it was the last opportunity to bear testimony against church slave-holding, till after it was dead.

"Brother Vandercook's Christian character was symmetrical and harmonious. He was 'present in spirit,' without being boisterous ; intelligent, without coldness or formality ; conscientious, without being morbidly particular ; and frank and faithful, without being uncharitable or severe ; and yet he cordially disliked everything like cant, or affectation of piety. To all this it may be added, with the utmost justice, that he was a true friend, a patriotic citizen, a kind and devoted husband and father, and a worthy example of the Christian citizen, gentleman and minister.

"And yet, among his last sayings he declared, 'I have no merit to plead ; I throw myself upon the atonement of Christ, and plead for mercy. But God knows I have always been on the side of his everlasting truth.'

"He was buried in the cemetery at Fulton, in a lot purchased and fitted up by those who loved him in Fulton, Oswego and Geddes, where he sleeps in Jesus till all the dead arise.

H. MATTISON."

Jersey City, August 14, 1866.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REV. JOHN V. HUMPHREY.

"REV. JOHN V. HUMPHREY was born in the town of Russia, Herkimer County, N. Y., August 24th, 1835. He was of Welsh descent; his parents were born in Wales. He was the oldest of a family of six children, and the first to enter the spirit land. At the early age of thirteen, he experienced religion, under the labors of Rev. Allen Miller, and soon after joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. His conversion was clear, and his faithful, devoted life evinced the reality of the change wrought in him by the Holy Spirit. He was successively class-leader, exhorter and local preacher. In 1862, he joined the Black River Conference, and remained an effective member till called to his reward, serving with acceptability and success the several charges to which he was appointed. Early last autumn, he was prostrated by fever, which, in a very few days, proved fatal. At the midnight hour, Sunday eve., September 23, 1866, our brother, apparently unconscious, passed from earth to the realms of immortality. Thus closed the labors of one of God's chosen servants, cut down early in life, in the midst of his work, torn suddenly from the embrace of kind friends, leaving his flock without a shepherd. Though called suddenly, he was ready—'he welcomed death, an end of fears, he was prepared to go.' He died well. Brother Humphrey was a conscientious and good man. As a preacher, earnest and practical, a lover of Methodism in all of its peculiarities. He is gone. 'God buries his workmen, but carries on his work.' His body rests in Heuvelton, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y.

'How beautiful it is for man to die
Upon the walls of Zion; to be called,
Like a watch-worn and weary sentinel,
To put his armor off and rest in heaven.' "

Having taken the above short Memoir from the minutes of 1867, we will further add that after Brother Humphrey was received on trial by the conference, in 1862, he was ap-

pointed to Rensselaer Falls, on the Oswegatchie river, a few miles from Ogdensburg, where he labored very efficiently for one year. In 1863, he was sent to Macomb, a few miles from his former charge, where he also labored one year in the ministry. In 1864, he was received into full connection, and appointed to Hammond, where his life and ministry, as above related, closed. Thus, after a ministerial experience of a little more than two years, our brother was called to his reward.

It is a blessed thought that no Christian dies alone. Though he may fall among comparative strangers in any part of the great moral battle-field, Jesus, the Captain, is near, and though he fall asleep in a state of unconsciousness, the blessed Saviour is near him, and even while passing through the valley, his rod and staff supports him to the celestial shore.

“Then let our hope of joys to come
Dispel our cares, and chase our fears;
If God be ours, we’re traveling home,
Though passing through a vale of tears.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

MEMOIR OF REV. GEORGE McMULLIN.

“REV. GEORGE McMULLIN died suddenly, of disease of the heart, at his residence in Florence, N. Y., December 31, 1866.

“He was born in Western, Oneida County, N. Y., April 3d, 1810. When about nineteen years of age, he was converted, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church.

“His first license to exhort, is dated Steuben, June 18th, 1830, signed by John Ercanbrack. His first license to preach was dated Whitestown, January 30th, 1832. In 1834, he was married, and his excellent companion now survives him.

“He was ordained deacon September 3d, 1839, by Bishop

Hedding, and elder by Bishop Ames, April 27th, 1862. He was employed by the presiding elder, and labored on the Lee Circuit with great acceptability and usefulness.

"In 1858, he was admitted into the Black River Conference on trial. His conference appointments were as follows: 1858, Oneida Lake; 1859-60, Steuben—the first year as junior preacher, with Brother J. W. Roberts, and the second year as senior, with Brother F. H. Beck; 1861-2, Redfield; 1863-4-5, Williamstown; 1866, Florence, where he finished his course.

"Brother McMullin was an excellent man, and a good preacher. He was faithful in his work as a minister, carefully attending to all the interests of the church. Much, indeed, might be said of Brother McMullin's excellences, but his record is on high, and his home is in heaven. By reason of a great snow storm, he spent his last Sabbath on earth at home, and seemed to enjoy it very much. He arose as usual on Monday morning, and after having kindled a fire, sat down, and was soon attacked with violent pain, and immediately became insensible. Subsequently he revived a little and was conscious for a few moments, but could say but little.

"His last utterances were, 'Blessed Jesus! Blessed Jesus!' He lingered until half-past eight in the evening, when his redeemed spirit was released from 'cumbrous clay,' and, we doubt not, soared to its more congenial home with the Saviour.

'In condescending love,
Thy ceaseless prayer he heard,
And bade thee suddenly remove
To thy complete reward.'

J. D. ADAMS, }
A. ROE, } *Committee."*
W. B. JOICE, }

The above Memoir from the conference minutes of 1867, comprises all the information the writer of this work has received in relation to the above very excellent and good brother minister. From what we personally knew of his character as a man and faithful minister, he is none too highly extolled. As to his learning and profundity of thought, we are not capable of judging, never having heard him preach nor enjoyed much familiar intercourse with him. Our

associations were simply of a conference character. Any one acquainted with the routine of conference business must be aware that however friendly and social all the members are, or desire to be, there is not for the leading active members of the conference all the time at their command necessary to form a very intimate acquaintance with each other that in most cases would be desirable, but we remember often the words of one of our social hymns,

“ Shall we know each other there ? ”

and the answer comes back with strongest emphasis :
“ We shall know as we are known, and see as we are seen.”

As the Memoir here inserted is comparatively brief, and as there is no mention made in it of his excellent wife, since deceased, we will add her Memoir to this chapter :

“ Abigail H. McMullin died at Utica, New York, August 9th, 1876. She was born at Rodman, Jefferson County, in 1810. When fifteen years of age, she moved with her father's family to Whitesboro, Oneida County. She was converted some years later, under the labors of Andrew Peck, and in 1834, became the wife of Rev. Geo. McMullin, a local preacher. They lived for some time in the vicinity of Whitesboro, thence moving to Seneca Falls, where they resided for about fifteen years.

“ The life of a woman is in most cases so intimately connected with that of her husband, that his history is her history. In reading Brother McMullin's obituary, I notice that he was admitted on trial in the Black River Conference, at Jordan, in 1858. He was ordained elder at Oswego, in 1862, by Bishop Ames. His appointments, after entering the traveling connection, were Oneida Lake, Steuben, Redfield, Williamstown and Florence, where he died January 31st, 1867. There Sister McMullin resided until the spring of 1875, when she removed to Clinton, and remained with her sister, Mrs. Parmelee, for about a year.

“ The deceased was the mother of three children. One of these died in infancy. The next member of the family whom she was called to mourn, was her husband, who died suddenly of heart disease. He arose one morning in usual health, but in a few moments was attacked with a violent pain, and became insensible. He only revived to say,

‘Blessed Jesus,’ showing that the one in whom he had trusted did not fail him in the hour when everything else failed.

“The second child, a son, became insane in young manhood. He was cared for by his mother, for a time, at their home, and then taken to the asylum at Mexico, whence he escaped, and she never heard of him more.

“Before this time, disease had attacked the daughter—the only remaining comfort—the one to whom she clung the more closely because of the loss of all the rest. After a lingering illness, she too, died, and like Naomi, our sister was bereft of her children and her husband. It is not strange, then, that when I first saw her two years ago, she was pale, worn, feeble, melancholy. With a mind not as likely as some to throw off grief, she never recovered her spirits, though for a time she was able to help herself and attend the means of grace. Her sister, watchful and solicitous for her comfort, saw that her mind was failing with her body. The weight of grief had been too heavy, and after some months of hoping against hope, by the advice of friends and physicians she was taken to the asylum at Utica. But she did not remain there long. God said, ‘It is enough,’ and in a few months she went to meet those who had preceded her into the spirit world, having ‘come out of great tribulation, and washed her robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’ It must have been a wonderful transition—up from an asylum to the mansions of the blest; from the confusion and jargon of such a company to the harmonies of heaven; from seeing through a glass so darkly to a view of eternal things, face to face; from grief heavier than most of us have known to the everlasting joy of Mount Zion. The night was dark, but ‘joy cometh in the morning.’

“Those who knew Sister McMullin earlier in life, can estimate her character and worth better than I. She was so broken in spirit while I knew her, that I presume there were left few traces of her former self. But I judge her to have been an earnest Christian woman, retiring and modest in the extreme, but faithful to every duty—a loving, pains-taking wife and mother—a Martha rather than a Mary, yet one worthy of the commendation that Mary received, ‘She hath done what she could.’

W. H. REESE.”

CHAPTER XXX.

REV. CHARLES GILES.

THE author fears to enter upon the task of writing a fitting Memorial chapter in memory of the life and labors of Rev. Charles Giles—a life so eventful, so protracted, so full of reality, and we may properly add, of romance, that the pen of the writer hesitates to open a chapter on a subject that would require a volume of hundreds of pages to do justice to. We have failed in receiving needful information from the older members—fathers of the conference—on the subject of this chapter. Alas! these have nearly all passed away to the world of spirits. Of the eighty preachers, including probationers, attending the first session of the Black River Conference, nine only remain as members of the body, and some of them are residing in different states, all the others having passed away, some by death, some by transfer, others by location and other causes, so that it is impossible to learn as much in regard to the subject of this chapter as though his former cotemporaries were now living and within reach. In making the attempt, however, to give his name an honorable record among those of his fellow-laborers, we must crave the indulgence of the older members of the conference for any lack in the filling up of the body of this chapter. We first present the Conference Memoir:

“Rev. Charles Giles was born near Fort Griswold, Connecticut, February 22d, 1783, and closed his eventful life in the city of Syracuse, New York, August 30th, 1867, aged 84 years. His conversion to God was remarkable, and his call to the ministry was heeded without any compromise: in 1805, he was admitted on trial in the Philadelphia Conference, and, in 1808, at a session of the New York Conference, he was ordained deacon. In 1810, July 20, at the first session of the Genesee Conference, his name appears;

in 1829 he became identified with the Oneida Conference. When the Black River Conference was organized, in 1836, his name was recorded on its minutes. With this body he wrought valiantly for God and man, and spent the remainder of his pilgrimage. He filled its most responsible charges—served as presiding elder, and was twice a delegate to the general conference. His was the work of a real pioneer; his circuits were immense in size, which he traveled amid privation, self-denial and suffering unknown to modern Methodist preachers. His first circuit embraced the territory now occupied by the Black River Conference, and about one-third of the Oneida Conference. He was a self-made man, and in the departments of science, biblical knowledge, taste for the beautiful and love of nature, his advancement inspired the people. Rich in fact, brilliant in thought, and intense in love for dying men, he was a man of vast power, intellectual and emotional. His eloquence within the days of his prime was at times almost unearthly, and multitudes now sainted owe their conversion through his instrumentality. Amid privations and disabilities, he kept the faith. At the name of Jesus, his eye kindled with light, and his face flushed with intelligence, though superannuation and extreme suffering made his mind utterly oblivious to all earthly things.

“He rests among the holy ones; his memory is enduring; his testimony for the truth is fixed in thousands of hearts; his voice mingles with the celestial choirs. Sing, shine, shout on, dear glorified brother, thy mantle falls on us.”

By the above Memoir we learn that he had a remarkable conversion and that he was admitted on trial in the Philadelphia Conference in the year 1805. At that period the Philadelphia Conference embraced a large portion of Pennsylvania and Western New York. He was appointed to Seneca Circuit as his first charge, and the following year, 1806, was sent to Otsego Circuit, and in 1808 was received into full connection and ordained deacon at a session of the New York Conference, to which his name had been transferred. He was appointed to Westmoreland Circuit. In 1809, his name does not appear on the general minutes, but in 1810, he was transferred to the Genesee Conference and

appointed to Chenango, and returned to the same charge in 1811. The two following years, 1812-13, he was sent to Western Circuit. For four years, 1814-15-16-17, he was presiding elder of the Oneida District, and from 1818 to 1821, four years, presiding elder of Chenango District, and the following four years, 1822-3-4-5, presiding elder of the Oneida District. In 1826, he was appointed to the charge of New York Mills and Whitesboro; 1827-8, New York Mills again. In 1829, by the new arrangement of conference boundaries, he found himself in the Oneida Conference, and was stationed at Whitesboro and Oriskany; 1830, he had charge of Rome station; 1831, Steuben Circuit; 1832, Westmoreland; 1833, Manlius Square; 1834, he was, probably at his own request and for the sake of rest, left without an appointment; 1835, he was stationed at Jordan. In 1836, he fell within the bounds of the newly formed Black River Conference, and was appointed to Weedsport, which station he also served the following year, which closed his active labors in the itinerancy. In 1838, his health was such that he applied for a superannuated relation, which was freely granted, and which relation he sustained to the conference for the long period of twenty-nine years, or until the time of his decease, in 1867.

It will be noticed from the above that Father Giles, as we prefer to call him, gave thirty-three years of his active, stirring life to the duties of the Methodist itinerancy, which, added to the twenty-nine years of his superannuation in the Black River Conference, makes sixty-two years, during which he was a member of an annual conference. He also was a delegate to the general conference of 1816 and 1820. It will also be noticed that during his traveling ministry, he served twelve consecutive years as presiding elder.

Had we space to insert all the incidents of his thirty-three years' experience as preacher and presiding elder, what a panoramic picture could be unfolded! And no doubt, his superannuated life would display many a picture equally

interesting and instructive. During the years of his active service, he was eminently successful as a revivalist. How many souls were converted to God through his instrumentality will never be known in time. He was a preacher full of faith, and seemed to be inspired by the Holy Ghost with a zeal and fervor, and a clearness and force of utterance, that few could withstand the frequent tremendous appeals he made to their conscience, as well as to their judgment. And in the edification or building up of the church of God in its most holy faith, he was equally successful. His long continued service as a presiding elder proves him to have been a superior executive officer and administrator of the discipline.

As a scholar, he was somewhat preëminent. He could not boast of many classical attainments, classically obtained or secured in college halls, nor do we know that he ever had an *Alma Mater* to bestow upon him its diplomas, but we do know that he was a man of extensive reading and solid acquirements, which rendered him fit to cope with other scholars who apparently had greater literary advantages. In eloquence, he had few superiors. When he got warmed up with his subject, torrents of eloquence would seem to flow spontaneously from his lips until the audience or congregation was, so to speak, entranced by the fervid and glowing eloquence of the speaker. When superannuated, he, unfortunately, was left poor, so far as earthly treasures are concerned. This fact rendered it necessary for the conference to come to his assistance at its annual sessions. Whenever his name was called in the regular order of routine business, and, as was customary, remarks were expected of him in regard to his wishes, he would rise and pour forth such a flood of inspired and impassioned eloquence, descriptive of his past and present experiences, and of his hopes of reaching the celestial city, that the conference would be melted into tears, the bishop himself sharing in the general emotion, and with loud hallelujahs resounding from porch to altar and



REV. BENJ. F. BROWN.

from altar to porch, the vote would be taken, and his character passed. Then would follow the special collection for Father Giles, and the collecting plates or baskets would be well filled by a generous audience of preachers and people. Those were golden days, not only for the recipient, but for the cheerful givers.

Father Giles was also an author and a poet. He published at least two poetical works of some merit: "*The Drunkard's Convention*," and the "*Triumph of Truth*," both of which had an extensive sale. He, however, rests from his labors, and from his earthly trials and troubles, of the latter of which we may not speak. It is a satisfaction to have it left on the record that he died well, and that the gates of the New Jerusalem were no doubt opened wide to receive his disenthralled spirit in its upward flight to the throne.

"He's gone! The spotless soul is gone,
Triumphant, to his place above;
The prison walls are broken down;
And angels speed his swift remove,
And shouting, on their wings he flies,
And gains his rest in Paradise."

CHAPTER XXXI.

REV. BENJAMIN F. BROWN.

THIS somewhat remarkable man left behind him when he died but few written reminiscences of his early days, or records relating to his ministerial life. And although the author has made several attempts to secure correspondence in this case, his attempts have proved abortive. Even the annual conference minutes, from which the author is under the necessity of drawing largely, in the case of every

preacher whose Memoir he records, are remarkably brief and silent on almost every point of Brother Brown's life and labors, and yet, that he was deserving of a worthy record, no one who knew him can doubt. But the strong probability is that the conference officers who made any record at all, labored under a similar difficulty to that which the author labors under now—the want of sufficient data; still it is due to the memory of the good man, to give in his Memoir all the facts that can be secured.*

Our first acquaintance with Brother Brown was when he preached within the bounds of Potsdam District, about the period of the formation of the Black River Conference. In the year 1835, he was received on trial by the Oneida Conference, and was appointed to Fort Covington Circuit, Fort Covington being at that time within the bounds of that conference, but located in the extreme north end of the state, bordering on the Canada line, on the 45th degree of north latitude. Here he preached one year. In 1836, by virtue of his previous year's location, he fell within the bounds of the Black River Conference, retaining his standing as a probationer of the second year, and was appointed to Heuvelton Circuit. We had comparatively few stations in those days. In the year 1837, he was received into full connection and ordained a deacon in the church of God, and was appointed to Bangor Circuit, in Franklin County, where he labored two full years with great success. In 1839, he was ordained elder and sent to Hopkinton Circuit, in St. Lawrence County. At the conference of 1840, he took what we old preachers used to call an "Irish Hoist," that is a removal from one extreme of the conference to the other, being appointed to Granby Circuit, in Oswego

* Since writing the above, the author has received certain facts relating to Brother Brown, from his son, Rev. D. M. Brown, a member of the North Indiana Conference, for which he will please accept our thanks. We have inserted such additional facts as our space would allow.

County, where he remained two years. In 1842, he was stationed at Palermo Circuit, with Augustine E. Munson as junior preacher, with whom he labored with much fraternal love and great success. The next year the conference sat in Syracuse, Bishop Waugh presiding, by whom he was sent to North Manlius Circuit, as preacher in charge, with Rev. Orra Squires as second preacher. 1844, at the conference held in Potsdam, Rev. Bishop Hamline presiding, he was appointed to Durhamville on the banks of the Erie canal, where he remained one year. Appointments wherever located, were in those days no sinecures, whether as it regards labor or salary. In looking at the conference steward's report for 1845, we find that, Brother Brown's claim was for salary \$232—of which he received \$99.89. Table expenses allowed him by the quarterly conference, \$25, received \$00.00; deficiency, \$157.59. It is true he received a respectable donation in addition to the above. Beside, there was no parsonage on the charge, which, of course, he had to provide for himself.

A little lower down on the same column, the author stumbled on his own name for the conference of 1845. He had the previous year been stationed at Jordan, one of the important stations in the conference, and he finds his claim to have been, self and wife and two children, as quarterage or salary, \$232.00, all having been paid; table expenses, \$65.00, all paid; for rent, \$60.00, paid; total, \$357.00. The highest claim that year, in the conference, was in the case of Rev. Hiram Mattison, stationed at Rome. His quarterage was \$304.00; table expenses, \$47.00; house rent, \$84.00; traveling, \$27.00; total \$462.00, all paid. In the conference that year there were sixty-six preachers who reported deficiencies to the total amount of over \$5,000, which if the reader will deduct from the small pittance allowed by each charge, will readily perceive that there was no great opportunity for the traveling ministers to increase in riches. But, notwithstanding their limited incomes the laborers were happy in

their work, and, although sometimes sorely pressed for the necessities of life for themselves and families, they seemed to enjoy life just as much as when in later years a more liberal allowance was made to meet their wants. Nor should the laity of the church in those days be blamed for the small salaries given. The ministers themselves had in a great measure the law-making power in their own hands, and the very small allowance made by the general conference shows that it was not money but souls that the preachers as a class were laboring for. In the matter of support, times have changed for the better, and while the ministers and their families are largely blest in receiving, the church as a whole is doubly blest in giving.

At the conference in 1845, Bishop Hedding presided. It was held in Mexicoville, Oswego County, Rev. G. Baker being elected secretary. At this conference, Brother Brown was appointed to New London Circuit, and at the conference of 1846, held at Lowville, under the presidency of Bishop Janes, he was sent to Mohawk Valley, where he remained two years. In 1848, at the conference in Adams, presided over by Bishop Janes, he was appointed to Depauville, in Watertown District, Lewis Whitcomb being presiding elder. On this charge he remained two years, doing a successful work. The two following years, 1850-1, he labored on Chateaugay Circuit and Belmont. Here his health failed, and at the next conference, 1852, he asked and received a superannuated relation, which relation he sustained till the close of life, he fixing his residence at Belmont, Franklin County, N. Y., where he resided at the time of his death, which occurred December 27th, 1867. Since his superannuation, his health continued on the decline, until at last weary nature gave way, and permitted him to find his long-sought rest. He died suddenly of apoplexy in the 60th year of his age, and twenty-third of his ministry.

As above stated, his death was sudden. After family worship, feeling somewhat indisposed, he laid down on the

bed to rest, but feeling worse he endeavored to rise, when he fell back with the words upon his lips, "Oh, my Jesus!" His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Samuel Call, at that time preacher in charge of Malone station, the text "Oh, death where is thy sting? Oh, grave where is thy victory?" etc. His remains were interred in Belmont, near the place of his former residence, and on the farm where he had spent the days of his superannuation.

From facts furnished by his son, as stated in the foot note, we learn that Brother Brown was the son of Major Daniel Brown, of Hartford, Washington County, New York. There were five sons in the family of his grandfather, all of whom served in the revolutionary war, Benjamin's father being among the number. The Major had a family of eleven children, including the subject of this sketch, and these children though favored in early life with such means of education as a new country affords, were not blessed with a religious training.

His father dying in 1826, Benjamin turned his thoughts to the subject of religion, and was soundly converted, but being perplexed by the absurdities of the Calvinistic creed, his hope departed, and despair took its place. After suffering for many days great mental anguish, he resolved that if it was decreed that he should go to hell, he would go praying; and immediately the light of a spiritual noonday flooded his soul. The victory was won. His soul was saved from doubt and despair forever thereafter.

Subsequently to his restoration to the divine favor, he applied himself assiduously to study, laboring with his hands for the means to secure a respectable education. He entered Cazenovia Seminary, and subsequently the Genesee Conference Seminary at Lima, where he closed his school life. As before stated, he joined the Oneida Conference in 1835, and the Black River in 1836. January 5th, 1837, he was united in marriage to Miss Mary W. Earl, of South Malone, a lady of good mental accomplishments, who proved to him

a precious gift from the Lord. During their happy married life, she bore him four sons and two daughters. The eldest son, William F., is a member of the Northern New York Conference. The second son, Charles H., is a member of the North Indiana Conference, as is also Daniel M., now stationed at Logansport, Indiana. The youngest son and child is pursuing his studies at the Methodist Episcopal College, Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is living with his beloved widowed mother, at the same place. The eldest daughter, Miss May E., is in the mission work of the church at La Junta, New Mexico. The youngest daughter, Miss Laura L., is district secretary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of Fort Wayne District.

Thus we perceive that not only the revered father and mother have filled up the greater measure of their days in usefulness, but all their children are following in their steps. To God be all the glory! It is safe to say that thousands were converted and added to the church through the labors of Brother Brown during his ministry.

In attempting to describe the character of Brother Brown, we have the pleasure of being able to assert, from our acquaintance with him for several years, that he was a truly Godly man. No unprejudiced mind could doubt his piety or moral worth. It is true, he was eccentric—exceedingly so, and yet his eccentricities all seemed to run in the religious channel. In preaching, exhorting or praying, he seemed to wander from the common way of doing things, and make use of expressions that scarcely any one else would think of. While preaching, his sermons displayed studious and reflective thought and more than ordinary application of principles, mostly based upon declarations found in the Bible, but brought home to the mind and understanding of the hearer, perhaps for the first time. His sermons were generally of a controversial or hortative character. He was severe in his attacks on Universalism, believing it to be a most dangerous doctrine, which he felt it his special duty to warn his hearers

against. Neither was he a friend of Calvinism as taught in those days by the pulpits of the land, but whenever he had a good opportunity of making an attack on any vulnerable point, he did not fail to do it. We said he was eccentric, but this did not lead him into undue severity of expression, as he always treated his hearers with extreme kindness, but with faithfulness in regard to error. As an exhorter, he excelled. Whenever he rose to exhort after a sermon by another minister, the congregation expected a tornado of hortative eloquence, which usually ended with the entire prostration of his massive physical system for a short time, after which, he would seem to rally in a few moments, and become a strong man again. On such occasions, he would fall flat on his back wherever he happened to be, whether in the preacher's stand at camp-meeting, in the school-house desk or in the open air. Another peculiarity was his absent-mindedness, not as it regards important matters, but he has been known, after an evening meeting and having assisted in extinguishing the candles, to take the candlestick in his hand, or thrust it into his overcoat pocket, and next morning would not know where or how he obtained it. And so with other small things—perspiring profusely, as he most always did in his public efforts, some kind-hearted brother or sister would hand him a pocket-handkerchief to wipe his face, and that would be the last of it till reminded by the owner. He has frequently found half a dozen handkerchiefs in his pockets at once, and not known where any of them came from. These eccentricities, that would appear wrong in others, were, by his friends and hearers, considered all right in Brother Brown, and often furnished moments of pleasantry to those interested. He had a large and stalwart frame, a cheerful, pleasant countenance, was very much given to loud ejaculations of praise and sounds of hallelujah, and "Glory to God!" would burst from his enraptured lips with an emphasis and power that would thrill the congregation; but, as in the case of another,

“ He sleeps his last sleep,
He has fought his last battle,”

till the archangel's trump “shall awake him to glory again.”

We append his Conference Memoir, fully endorsing its application to our beloved Brother Brown :

Memoir of Brother B. F. Brown.

“ Both physically and mentally, Brother Brown was a remarkable man. His powerful and well-proportioned body, with proper care and skill, would have borne him triumphantly through labors and privations sufficient to overpower any ordinary man ; but he had a mind and heart too large and too exacting, for even his powers. The fires of his love and zeal burned so fiercely, that all his self-control could not restrain his efforts within the bounds of his strength, and he had too soon to abandon the work he so much loved.

“ His communion with God was not that of ordinary men ; it was an absorbing, burning passion which, at any moment, whether in the prayer meeting, the social circle or the business interview, would seal up his consciousness to all earthly things and prostrate his energies, to be gathered up, by-and-by, only to exert their first returning activities in uttering repeated shouts of ‘Glory to God!’

“ He died as he lived. He breathed out his life as if his soul had been released in answer to the rapturous prayer :

O, would he more of heaven bestow,
And let the vessel break ;
And let our ransomed spirits go
To grasp the God they seek.

In view of such a scene, we ask triumphantly, ‘O, Death ! where is thy sting ?’ ”

CHAPTER XXXII.

REV. DAVID FERGUSON.

“ REV. DAVID FERGUSON died in great peace, February 28th, 1868, in the town of Oswego, New York, in the 59th year of his age.

“ He was born in Western, Oneida County, New York,

and in May, 1831, converted, near Mexico, Oswego County. As early as 1837, he was employed by the presiding elder on Old Victory Circuit. The next year he was admitted on trial in the conference, and appointed to North Manlius. He afterwards served Hammond, Pierrepont mission, Lisbon, Natural Bridge, Copenhagen, Ellisburgh, Pillar Point, Booneville, New London, Williamstown, Chateaugay, Norfolk, Parishville, Colton and Parishville, Hermon, Fort Jackson, Butler and Oswego Centre; thus continuing in the regular work for 27 years. Four years ago, on account of failing health, he received a superannuated relation to the conference, hoping that a brief respite from toil would recruit his wasted energies, and permit him to resume the work he loved so well. But in this he was disappointed; his mansion was ready, and God called him home.

“Brother Ferguson was a good man, and a faithful and efficient minister of Jesus Christ. He exemplified in a consistent life the doctrine which he so earnestly preached to others, and shed a rich Christian influence upon all around him. He was a faithful pastor, making Christ preëminent in all his intercourse with the people, and by close, pointed conversation, led them to Christ and heaven. In the early part of his ministry, especially, revivals crowned his efforts, but his peculiar mission seemed to be to build up believers in the faith of the gospel. As a preacher he was more solid than showy; his sermons were well arranged and full of thought, and listened to with pleasure and profit. He was a man of one work, true to his calling, and faithful to his trust. He was found at his post till the Master said: ‘It is enough, come up higher.’

“For nearly two years, he suffered greatly from a scrofulous affection; his pain was often excruciating, but he suffered as a Christian; in him ‘patience had her perfect work,’ enabling him to say, ‘Thy will be done.’ Just before his departure, he asked his friends to sing, and as they sang to him of heaven, his spirit plumed its wings for immortality, and soon after took its flight to the home of angels and God.

‘Servant of God, well done!
Thy glorious warfare’s past;
The battle’s fought, the race is won,
And thou art crowned at last.’ ”

The compiler has inserted the above tribute to the memory of Brother Ferguson as it appeared in the Black River Conference minutes of 1868, and will only add that having been his presiding elder for three years, in 1854-5-6, while stationed at Norfolk, Parishville and Colton, he is prepared to endorse fully the high estimate placed upon his moral worth and his Christian and ministerial character by the writer of the above brief but excellent Memoir.

Brother Ferguson was indeed a good man, well read, but not brilliant. He attempted no display, but seemed only anxious to preach the truth and the whole truth in its simplicity and power. He will long be remembered by the older members of Potsdam District, and in other districts of the conference, as a faithful ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ, but he, like others, has "gone up through great tribulation, having washed his robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

REV. JOHN W. COOPE.

THIS pure minded and deeply pious man of God, was during the entire course of his ministry connected with the Black River Conference, but on account of the absorption of this conference into the Northern New York, and the fact of his residing at the time of his death within the bounds of the Central New York Conference, and his widow preferring to remain within the bounds of the same, for those or some other reason, no Memoir was inserted in the annual minutes of the Black River Conference of that year. The strong probability, however, is, that as he died during the last session of the Black River Conference, and only

two days before its final close, sufficient time had not elapsed for the presentation of a suitable Memoir, while the conference having heard of his lamented decease, passed unanimously the following resolutions of sympathy and condolence.

On Monday, April the 13th, being the fifth day of the conference then holding its session in Malone, Franklin County, N. Y., a telegram was received by the secretary from W. J. Moses, Esq., of Auburn, announcing the death of Rev. J. W. Coope, whereupon a committee of six of his former co-laborers was appointed to prepare a suitable Memoir, viz: W. S. Titus, R. Reynolds, P. D. Gorrie, J. N. Brown, Wm. B. Joice and P. H. Wiles, who reported the resolutions before referred to :

“*Whereas*, It hath pleased Almighty God to transfer our beloved brother and fellow-laborer, the Rev. J. W. Coope, to the blessed conference of the ministering hosts above, at the very time of the annual session of the Black River Conference he so much loved, and of which he was an honored and most worthy member ; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That we, his brethren, cherish a precious memory of his exalted Christian virtues, and of that divine adorning which we saw our glorious Redeemer arraying our brother for himself, while he was a bold witness and blessed illustration of the gospel of Christ among men.

“*Resolved*, 2d, That we tender to his bereaved widow and fatherless children our deepest Christian sympathies, and we will offer to God our fervent prayer that divine support and consolation may be given them till the whole family shall meet in Heaven.

“*Resolved*, 3d, That a copy of the above be sent by the secretary of the conference to sister Coope, and also to the *Northern Christian Advocate*.”

In further reference to his conference relation at the time of his death, his daughter, Miss Kittie M. Coope, writes the author as follows, under date of August 11th, 1879 :

“REV. P. D. GORRIE—*Dear Brother* :—I see that my father’s name is not on the list of those who died members of the Black River Conference. He died April 12th, 1868, and during the last session of the Black River Conference,

the Northern New York Conference not having been formed by order of the general conference until the next May, subsequent to his decease. We would dislike very much to have father's name dropped from the 'Memorial,' for to him the Black River Conference was as the apple of his eye. I never knew one so strongly attached to his ministerial brethren than was father. Mother made the remark at the first change of conference boundary, that she was glad father was spared that change, for it would have been a great affliction to him to have been separated from any of his brethren. My only brother, mentioned in the obituary, died in 1874, so that mother and I are left alone. For twelve years mother has been a great sufferer, and is rapidly failing, and feels that she will soon meet the loved ones on the other side of the river."

From the foregoing statements, it will readily be seen that while Brother Coope died a member of the Black River Conference, the Memorial services which were held on Saturday, the very day on which he died, did not and could not embrace the name of our dear departing brother.

In regard to his biographical sketch, instead of presenting to the reader remarks of our own, we prefer to insert the following tribute to his memory, prepared by his intimate friend Rev. Wm. Searls, and kindly furnished by the daughter, Miss Kittie M. Coope :

Rev. John W. Coope.

We copy the following from the *Northern Independent* :

"Rev. John W. Coope, of Black River Conference, died at his residence in this city, on Sabbath evening, April 12th, 1868. Brother Coope was born in Preble, Cortland County, New York, September 17th, 1809, and experienced religion, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, in October, 1830. He was led to the Saviour through the labors of Revs. Alvin Torry and Calvin Danforth, preachers on what was then called Fabius Circuit, Oneida Conference. His conviction for sin was deep and powerful, and his conversion was marked and clear. He was licensed to exhort in 1840, by Rev. T. B. Rockwell, and was licensed as a local preacher by Rev. J. Worthing, then acting as presiding

elder, in 1841. He removed to Wayne County the same year, and was very soon recommended to the Black River Conference as a suitable person to be received into the effective ranks of the ministry.

“His recommendation was from what was then known as Rose Circuit. Rev. George Gary, of precious memory, was the presiding elder. At the conference in Syracuse, he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Waugh, in 1843. He graduated to elder's orders two years later, and was ordained by Bishop Hedding at the session of the conference held at Mexicoville, New York. In a note, written by his own hand, he speaks of those days as ‘days of precious memory.’ He devoted himself with zeal to the duties of the gospel ministry, and was eminently calculated to do good; for he had the happy faculty of winning the confidence and esteem of all with whom he came in contact.

“He made true friends everywhere, for he possessed that nobleness of soul which commended him to those whose friendship is of true value. He served in the order of regular appointments, Rose Circuit, Liverpool station, Hannibal Circuit, Red Creek station, Rose station, and VanBuren Circuit, making in all, ten years of effective service—at the conclusion of which he was compelled to take a superannuated relation to the conference, because of a severe hemorrhage of the lungs, from the effects of which he never recovered. He remained superannuated the rest of his days. He came to this city about seven years ago, and gathered around him, in a very short time, a large number of very interesting and warm friends—friends whose attachment increased as the years went by.

“He wrote in a little book, in regard to the years he spent in the regular work of the ministry, as follows: ‘When I look over the history of my life, I fix on the ten years I spent in active service in the ministry as the brightest of all my history; and if I had a hundred years to give, they should all be freely consecrated to the service of the church of God.’ And he continues thus: ‘The last sixteen years of my life have been mingled with hopes and fears. I felt at times that I should soon be able to take my place in the ranks with my brethren in the conference, and then my sickness would return with increasing force, and hopes of recovery would vanish.’ But all these years, when many would have given up *entirely*, he continued to follow

some kind of business, in order to provide the comforts of life for his dear family. He only grieved that he could do no more. I can do no better than to quote his own words in this connection: 'It has now come to pass, that my hands can no longer labor for the wants of this poor, feeble body, or the comfort of my dear wife and daughter, who depend on me for support. It is to me a great grief that I cannot do more for them, especially when I think of the part my dear wife has taken in all the cares and toils of life. She stood by my side in the itinerant work like a true helper in the vineyard of the Lord. Her counsel and prayers have been of great service to me; but now we are both on the down-hill side of life, pressed with cares and borne down with disease. We shall soon be at the end of the journey. My greatest anxiety *now* is that my only son may become a Christian, and that my dear family may all meet me in my Father's heavenly kingdom.' 'The cause of God is as near my heart as ever, and O, glad would I be to go out again and preach the everlasting gospel to poor sinners, and see them come flocking to the cross, as in former times.' For many years he had been suffering from consumption, that disease which has carried off so many of the noble and the good; and which, during the last four months, having confined him closely to his house, worked on his mortal frame till the wheels of life stood still. His growing weakness had been for a long time painfully perceptible to himself and friends. He commented upon his condition as follows: 'I am admonished to-day, by looking at my feet and ankles and seeing how they are swollen, that the end is not far distant, when I shall be beyond the reach of change, and when joys eternal shall be mine. I shall stand upon the sea of glass mingled with fire, in a few days.' A very few days before he died we asked him how it looked beyond, and his reply was, 'There is not a ripple upon the waters—all is well.'

"He praised the Lord with a loud voice when we would sing at his request,

'There is a fountain filled with blood,

and he asked to have it sung at his funeral, which we did. We feel safe in saying, that the city of Auburn never saw a brighter exhibition of Christian character than in our departed

brother. At times, an overpowering divine influence pervaded his room, and all felt sensible that God was there. These remarkable manifestations were the 'dying grace,' which believers receive when they are about to pass over Jordan. In his case, those well-known lines of Dr. Young were true :

'The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged beyond the common walks
Of virtuous life—quite in the verge of heaven.'

"Or as David said : 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.' May God bless and sustain those he so dearly loved, and keep them safely until in that better land they

'Meet one another again.'

"Auburn, May 1st, 1868.

WM. SEARLS."

We only add that from the rather limited intercourse we were permitted to enjoy with Brother Coope, we learned to form a very exalted opinion of his deep, earnest piety. His very appearance conveyed the impression to the mind of the observer, that our brother was emphatically a man "who walked with God" and when the end came, he "was not, because God took him."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

REV. MORENUS THRASHER.

THIS worthy brother in the ministry was born in the township of Sydney, Midland District, formerly Canada West, and now known as the Province of Ontario, Dominion of Canada. The exact date of his birth we have not been able to ascertain, but suppose it to have been in the year 1815.

He was converted at the age of seventeen, and soon found his way to the southern shores of the St. Lawrence river, where he seems to have entered heartily into the work of self-improvement and of practical usefulness, in connection with the institutions of Methodism in his newly adopted country. In the month of September, 1834, while attending a camp-meeting, held in the town of LeRay, in Jefferson County, New York, he received a powerful baptism of the divine spirit, by which his faith was quickened and his zeal in the cause of God largely increased, and he felt more strongly than ever that God had a work for him to do in the spread of gospel truth among men. Nor was this impression confined to himself, others became convinced that he was divinely called to the ministry. Accordingly, in 1835, he was licensed to exhort, soon after which he became a student in the conference seminary, at Gouverneur, Rev. Anson W. Cummings being principal, and Edward Bannister, professor, remaining there one year in making preparation for the great work before him. How long he labored as a local preacher, we have not been informed, but in the year 1841, he was duly recommended to, and received on trial by the Black River Conference, and appointed to Sprague's Corners, a small charge near the school he had been attending. In 1842, he was sent to Hopkinton Circuit, in St. Lawrence County, with Rev. David Chidester as preacher in charge, and Rev. Aaron Adams as presiding elder on the district. At the session of the conference of 1843, held in Syracuse, Bishop Waugh presiding, Brother Thrasher was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon, and appointed to Bangor Circuit. At the conference of 1844, held in Potsdam, he was sent to Hammond Circuit with Augustus Hall as junior colleague, Rev. Lewis Whitcomb, presiding elder—this circuit then being attached to Adams District. In 1845, he was under the necessity of asking for a location, which relation he retained until the year 1853, when he was re-admitted and appointed to Liverpool

station, in Onondaga County, where he remained during the following year, 1854.

In 1855, he was stationed at Manlius, and the two following years, (1856-7,) at Oneida Lake. In 1858, at Victory, and 1859-60, on Philadelphia Circuit in Jefferson County. In 1861-2, he preached on Williamstown Circuit, in Oswego County, and in 1863, in Vermillion; 1864, at Volney, same county, which closed his active labors. At the conference of 1866, held at Fulton by Bishop Ames, Brother Thrasher was present, but his health had become so much impaired that his name was placed on the superannuated list, where it remained until the period of his death, which occurred July 13th, 1868, in Palermo, Oswego County, New York, having spent some eighteen years in the effective work of the ministry, besides the time spent as a superannuate. And thus died our dear brother, in the 54th year of his age.

Brother Thrasher was a good minister of Jesus; plain, pointed and practical in his ministrations, he enforced the doctrines and precepts of the gospel as one having authority by virtue of a divine commission. He was, at times, thought to be severe in his condemnation of wrong-doing, but his hearers always acknowledged that he was no more so than was his Master, who had occasion to exclaim: "Ye serpents and generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" and yet his severest denunciations of sin were always tempered with the sweet invitations of the gospel of peace as he uttered the blessed words: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light;" and thus by a proper admixture of law and gospel, threatenings and promises, Brother Thrasher strove to win men to Christ. Nor was he unsuccessful in the accomplishment of this task, as many, no doubt, in the day of eternity, will have reason

to thank God for the ministrations of this faithful servant of the Most High.

Of his religious life, we may briefly speak: His piety could not be doubted; he breathed the spirit of Christian love—love to God and love to man. His Christian zeal also appeared to all who sat under his ministry, and by the fervent appeals made to his hearers, they took knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus.

His latter end was what might have been expected in the case of such a Christian hero. He not only died well, but he died triumphantly. Just before his death, he exclaimed that he had “peace with God through Jesus Christ, joy in the Holy Ghost, and fellowship with the saints. Glory to the dying Lamb! All is triumphantly clear!” Thus died Morenus Thrasher, and is it not worth a long life of piety and self-devotion to be able to die as the Christian dies—to “pass through death triumphant home” to the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for them that love him?

“Oh! what are all my sufferings here
If Lord, thou count me meet
With that enraptured host to appear,
And worship at thy feet?”

CHAPTER XXXV.

REV. WILLIAM B. JOICE.

THIS sweet spirited minister of Jesus Christ was born in Huntersland, Schoharie County, state of New York, on the 16th of April, 1820, and was converted in the summer of 1839, when he was about nineteen years of age. His childhood's history, and the circumstances attending his conversion, are not known to the author, and the best the latter can

do is to go by the conference record as found in the annual minutes ; for with the subject of this Memoir he had no personal acquaintance, except meeting him as a beloved brother at our annual conference sessions, and the impressions made at such times, and retained in the memory, were greatly in favor of the worthy brother, whose name stands at the head of this chapter.

Brother Joice became a resident of the town of Palermo in the fall of 1846. He held a license to exhort for about two years, when he received a license to preach, which he used about two years, and was soon after employed by Rev. George Gary, at that time presiding elder of Adams District, to travel and preach on Henderson Circuit, which, at the conference of 1850, had been left to be supplied. Being recommended by the quarterly conference as a proper person to travel and preach, he was, at the next conference of 1851, at its session in Oswego, received on trial, and returned to Henderson charge, where he labored efficiently another year, and was then appointed to Ellisburgh charge in the same district, Rev. Arzar J. Phelps being presiding elder. At the conference of 1853, held in Watertown, he was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Matthew Simpson, and was appointed to Martinsburgh, in Lewis County, Rev. Gardner Baker being then the presiding elder of Adams District. Here he labored one year, and at the ensuing conference, held at Camden in 1854, was stationed in Champion in the same district. In 1855, at the session of the conference held in Weedsport, he was ordained elder by Bishop Janes, thus having passed through his four years' course of conference study with credit and honor to himself. Having served the Champion charge the preceding year with great acceptability, he was re-appointed the second year to the same charge, which he also served as acceptably during the second year as he had done during the preceding year. In 1856-7, he labored in South Rutland, and enjoyed two highly prosperous years. During the suc-

ceeding two years, 1858-9, he preached in Lorraine and Worth, and in New Bremen during 1860 and 1861. In 1862-3, he labored in Collamer, and in 1864, at Central Square; in 1865-6, at Vermillion, where he spent two successful years, and in 1867-8, he preached at Depauville, Jefferson County, where he closed his labors with his life, on the 17th day of March, 1869, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the nineteenth of his active ministry. His remains were conveyed to Vermillion, in Oswego County, where they lie deposited—"dust to dust, earth to earth, ashes to ashes,"—to await the future bursting of the tomb, and to rise in the morning of the resurrection a revived and glorious body.

Brother Joice was a successful preacher and minister of the gospel. We use the two terms purposely and distinctively, for some are what may be called good *ministers*, who are not celebrated as good—that is, *great*—preachers; and on the other hand, some, we fear, are credited with being more than mediocre preachers who fall below the proper standard as ministers and pastors. Brother Joice appears to have blended the two qualities, and was at once a good preacher and an excellent pastor, visiting the people of his charge frequently, comforting and encouraging the weak, and admonishing and mildly reproofing the erring with all long-suffering and patience.

As a man and as a Christian, he was justly honored, being of an exceedingly meek and quiet spirit, never obtruding where he was not welcome, rather inclining to be retiring in his manners, not because he felt himself to be superior to others, but as if he felt himself "to be the least of all saints," and was willing, apparently, to sit at the feet of his brethren and be an humble learner. The writer of his Memoir in the conference minutes, Rev. S. M. Warn, says of him: "Brother Joice was one of those men who must be known to be appreciated. A casual observer would fail to discern the excellences of his character. Quick to

plan, prompt to execute, he was enabled to accomplish much in a limited time. Keenly alive to the interests of the church of his choice, and jealous for its honor, he allowed no opportunity to pass unimproved where those interests might be promoted or its honors advanced. He lived, labored and died in his Master's service—a faithful Methodist preacher. The last two years of his life were the most successful of his ministry. He has gone to his rest, leaving a good record with us that he had fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith."

Brother Joice was a man of deep and fervent piety ; full of faith, his countenance expressive of constant communion with God, and his daily life such as to prove his inward purity. He lived well, worked well, died well, and has no doubt gone to receive the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

REV. JESSE PENFIELD.

THERE is not in the conference minutes any Memoir of this able minister, nor have we received from any direct source information in regard to his birth, education, conversion, &c. The best we can do is to state that he was a member of the Oneida Conference, having joined on trial in the year 1831 ; that he was in that year appointed to LeRay Circuit, within the bounds of the future Black River Conference. In 1832-3, he labored on Sandy Creek Circuit. In 1834, he was received into full connection and appointed to Pulaski ; 1835, to Mexico. In 1836, he was included in the number of preachers who fell within the bounds of the Black River Conference, and was stationed at Mexico ; 1837-8, Carthage ; 1839,

he was superannuated; 1840, made effective and stationed on LeRay Circuit; 1841, made supernumerary and appointed to LeRay; 1842, he was again superannuated; 1843, restored to the effective list and sent to Gouverneur; 1844-5, to Turin; 1846-7, to Herkimer; 1848, Mohawk Valley; 1849, Frankfort; 1850-51, superannuated; 1852, restored to effective list and sent to Champion; 1853, returned to Champion. From 1854 to the close of life, he remained on the superannuated list, and removed to the state of Illinois, where he died in faith, June 6th, 1869.

The above facts comprise the substance of all the records we have been able to obtain in regard to this good man and able minister of the New Testament. It seems from the above that he preached some eighteen years as an effective member of the conference, and was a superannuate for twenty years. We regret very much the meagre amount of information we are able to give in regard to his life and labors. We know, however, from memory and the limited knowledge we obtained by personal intercourse with him, that he was mentally a strong man. He had the appearance of being more than an ordinary man, intellectually; tall, and of commanding proportions, physically, he would at once arrest the attention of strangers as a gentleman of refinement and good taste. We remember he had a good delivery, was a strong speaker, and must have been a preacher far above mediocrity. We never had the opportunity of hearing him preach, and hence cannot speak more definitely.

But whatever his strength of mind, it is evident from his repeated change of relation from the effective to the superannuated ranks, that, physically, he was infirm for many years. His death occurring so far from the midst of his old brethren in the Black River Conference leaves a blank in his history that cannot well be filled up; but we doubt not his triumphant passage to the skies as one of the redeemed of earth—as an heir of glory! His record is on high!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

REV. ABSALOM MOSHER.

THE author has utterly failed in his attempts to secure returns in regard to the following departed brother, and can only give his appointments from year to year, as they stand recorded in the minutes of the conference, with a few additional remarks, viz :

This good brother became a probationer in the Black River Conference, in 1857 and was stationed at Antwerp, Jefferson County, New York. In 1858, he was sent to Depeyster, in St. Lawrence County ; 1859, he was received into full connection, and returned to Depeyster for a second year ; the two succeeding years, he was stationed at Rensselaer Falls ; 1862-3, at Waddington ; 1864, at Richville ; 1865-6, at Redfield ; 1867-8-9, he was superannuated. He died at Hampden, Ohio, June 9th, 1869, in peace, having thus served the church and blessed the world by ten years' effective and laborious service, and two years of superannuated labor and suffering.

Brother Mosher was a good man and a good minister and preacher. His frequent returns to his appointments for the second year will attest the latter truth. From our rather limited acquaintance with him, which was formed mostly at our conference sessions, we obtained an exalted opinion of the brother as a man of somewhat superior attainments and more than ordinary intelligence. He had every appearance of a Christian gentleman, which the author thinks is one of the best encomiums that can be bestowed upon any one at all entitled to the name of gentleman—to have the name Christian attached to him.

We regret that we cannot give the particulars of his superannuated life, and especially of his last sickness and death, but we have no doubt he died well, and left a world of labor and suffering for the “rest that remaineth to the people of God.”

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

REV. SPENCER R. FULLER, A. M.

REV. SPENCER R. FULLER, A. M., was born at Fullersville, St. Lawrence County, N. Y., June 6th, 1829, and died September 16th, 1870, in Watertown, N. Y. He attended school in his early youth at Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary and Carthage Academy. While here, he was happily converted to God at the age of 22 years, and soon after, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Upon his conversion, his natural thirst for knowledge was greatly quickened, and he went to Falley Seminary, at Fulton, N. Y., to pursue his studies. He remained here as student and teacher for about three years. He then went to Wesleyan University, and graduated with honor in the class of 1859. He received his first license as a local preacher on the 9th of May, 1857. He was married to Miss Sarah S. Horr, November 20, 1860.

He joined the Black River Conference in 1861, and was stationed at Martinsburgh one year; Syracuse, 1st church, two years; Rome, 1st church, two and one-half years; Lima Seminary, principal, one and one-half years; Watertown, Arsenal Street Church, two years and four months.

He returned to his charge in Arsenal street, Watertown, from our last conference, in apparent good health, and went forward in his work. The extensive repairs on the church at Watertown greatly added to his labors. Still he worked on with unflagging devotion as long as he could walk from his house. On the 20th of July, he was stricken down with a violent hemorrhage of the lungs, and in eight short weeks quick consumption, in utter defiance of medical skill, had wrought its work of death. Thus, in the fullness of his strength and usefulness, our dear friend and brother passed

away. His sickness and death are unaccountable. The last conversation the writer ever had with him, he said: "Why I am here, dying with quick consumption, I cannot understand, for I had always supposed if any man in the conference had strong and healthy lungs it was myself."

To yield to sickness and to death in the midst of his prime, when his family, the church and the world so much needed him, was a severe trial; but in the very first days of his illness, he looked the sternest crisis of his life squarely in the face, and in full view of every possible contingency of suffering and death, intelligently and calmly he said, through the power of divine grace, "The will of God be done."

Brother Spencer R. Fuller was a good, true and noble man, a loving husband, a tender father, a Christian gentleman, a hard student, a fine scholar, a hearty Methodist, a strong preacher, a faithful pastor, a lover of the Sunday-school, an uncompromising foe of intemperance and wrong in all its forms. He was modest and unassuming in his manners, but absolutely immovable in his convictions of right and duty.

When the news of his death went out to Martinsburgh, Syracuse, Rome and Lima, the hearts of hosts of warm friends melted in sadness, and spontaneous tributes of love to the memory of the good man leaped from every lip.

In this day of momentous work, when brave, strong and true men are so much needed, the death of such a man is a great loss. But God knows best, and we will not complain. To our dear Sister Fuller, in her irreparable loss and untold loneliness and grief, and to her three fatherless and tender children, we extend our warmest sympathies, and most earnestly do we commend them to the God of the widow and the Father of the fatherless.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

REV. ELIJAH SMITH.

"REV. ELIJAH SMITH was born in Newport, Herkimer County, N. Y., September 4th, 1797, and died in LeRay, Jefferson County, N. Y., September 30th, 1870.

"Brother Smith was converted in early youth through the instrumentality of pious parents. He was renewed in the divine life in 1820, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 1832 was received on trial by the Oneida Conference. During the period of his effective ministry, which closed in 1855, he seemed to live and labor in the element of divine love, which accounts for his success in winning souls to Christ, and in building up believers in the faith of the gospel. He was an able minister of the New Testament, and a loving and devoted pastor; and although called suddenly, he went safely and triumphantly to his eternal home."

We have taken the above short Memoir from the conference minutes of 1871, which is all the data that have been furnished the compiler of these sketches in regard to Brother Smith, excepting the list of appointments from year to year. From these we learn that after joining the Oneida Conference in 1832, as above stated, he was appointed to Brownville and Sackets Harbor; 1833, to Sandy Creek; 1834, he was received into full connection, and ordained deacon; he was appointed this year and the succeeding one, to Black River Circuit. In 1836, he became a member of the Black River Conference, and was appointed to Mannsville; 1837, to Adams; 1838, to Lowville and Martinsburgh; 1839, to Lowville; 1840-1-2, he was superannuated; 1843, effective, and stationed at Philadelphia, in Jefferson County, to which he was returned in 1844; 1845-6, to Fort Covington; 1847-8, to Canton; 1849, Malone; 1850, Herkimer; 1851-2, Booneville; 1853-4 to Turin; and in 1865, he was placed on the superannuated list, where he remained until

released from all his infirmities by death, in the year 1870. We have a vivid recollection of this dear brother and able minister as he passed in and out before us at our annual gatherings. He appeared like a man of true merit and of pious Christian deportment, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and served the church well for many years as a successful minister of the gospel. Though unknown to many of the present generation, he, by others, will be held in long remembrance. We exceedingly regret the want of more information, but Brother Elijah Smith rests in peace!

CHAPTER XL.

REV. GEORGE C. CREEVEY.

THE above name of George C. Creevey stands on the conference list of members as having been admitted on trial in 1865, but there is no record on the printed minutes of his appointments for that and the succeeding year 1866. In 1867-8, he was stationed at Canton; 1869, at Bangor; 1870, no record is found on the minutes of his relation or his appointment. In 1870, he is returned on the minutes as having deceased during the year, but the exact date of his death or the place where he died are not given, as no obituary notice seems to have been prepared for publication. He is no doubt safe in the land of light and glory!

CHAPTER XLI.

REV. LEWIS W. PHELPS.

[From the minutes of 1871.]

“REV. LEWIS W. PHELPS died of consumption in Martinsburgh, N. Y., February 28, 1871, aged 25 years.

“The church of Christ has always kept in memory those whose living virtues were piety's noblest models. She is

impelled to this from the recognition of the great truth, that the righteous are held in everlasting remembrance. There is not so noble a sight in this world as an experienced Christian; one who has testified by his own triumph to the reality of religion.

“Brother Phelps, after completing his studies in the Lowville Academy, where he was converted to God, joined the Black River Conference at Malone, April 8th, 1868.

“His first appointment was at New Bremen, Adams District. He was removed at the end of the first year to Barnes Corners in the same district. His labors this year were eminently successful, and more than fifty persons were added to the church. But his health so far failed this year, that, at the conference of 1870, he was compelled to take a super-numerary relation.

“As a man, Brother Phelps was true, kind and benevolent. As a minister, he possessed many excellent qualities. He had bright opinions of the ministerial office, and aimed to exemplify them in his entire life and influence. His understanding had been supernaturally opened, and he saw Christian truth with great clearness. Hence his piety was deep, constant and uniform. He preached, not to maintain ministerial dignity, but to save souls, and in this he gave full proof of his ministry. His character was ennobled by virtue, and enriched by faith. The consummation of his hope has been reached, and he is forever with the Lord.

C. H. GUILÉ.”

NORTHERN NEW YORK CONFERENCE MEMORIAL.

CHAPTER XLII.

REV. HENRY S. HOLMES.

THIS excellent and beloved minister of the gospel was born in Richland, Oswego County, N. Y., on the 10th day of March, 1826. While attending school in his boyhood days, mainly through the efforts and prayers of his faithful and pious teacher, Miss Maria Dewey, now Mrs. Babcock, of Fredericksburgh, Va., he was induced to accept of Christ as his personal Saviour. This important event occurred March 17th, 1848, when he was nineteen years of age. He was baptized, and received into the fellowship of the Methodist Episcopal Church by Rev. Wm. H. Hawkins, then pastor of the church at Vienna. Henry united with the church under a full sense of his responsibilities as assumed in taking this important step. After uniting with the visible church, he saw a world lying in wickedness around him, and his soul yearned for the salvation of his fellow-men from the slavery of sin. He applied himself closely to study, and in the course of a few years, felt himself called to the work of the ministry. He received a license to exhort in Mexico, Oswego County, which he improved with great zeal and earnestness, and not without success, so that in the following year, he received license to preach, and was employed by the presiding elder, Rev. G. G. Hapgood, to supply the place of junior preacher on Palermo Circuit, with Rev. P.

H. Wiles as preacher in charge. He served the charge so well as junior preacher that he was recommended by the quarterly conference as a proper person to be received into the traveling ministry. Accordingly, he was received on trial by the Black River Conference, at its session held in Camden in 1854. He was appointed to Hinmansville in Syracuse District, where he labored faithfully for one year.

During the year 1854, he was happily married to Miss Abbie A. Erskine, a young lady well adapted to be a co-laborer with him in his holy calling, and who yet survives, at this writing, (1880,) to enjoy the blessing of God's sustaining grace, in the state of Wisconsin, and who, though distant from the scenes of her early life, does not forget her former friends, nor, especially, the "loved one" who was the chosen companion of her youthful days. The blessings and favor of the widow's God are still hers in rich abundance, and so may they ever continue!

At the following conference of 1855, he, after a creditable examination in the first years' course of study, was continued on trial, and appointed to Hastings charge, Camden District, with Rev. George Sawyer as his presiding elder. Here he also labored efficiently for one year. At the conference of 1856, he was, after due examination, admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Waugh, and appointed to Paris and Hastings charge, thus serving a portion of the circuit for two years. The next year, 1857, he was appointed to South Mexico, Oswego County. In 1858, having served the four years required by the discipline of the church preparatory to elder's orders, he was approved by the conference, and ordained elder by Bishop E. R. Ames at Jordan, Onondaga County, N. Y. His health having become impaired by disease and his previous ministerial labors, his brethren in the conference thought it advisable for him to retire for a season from the active work, and seek rest. They consequently gave him a superannuated relation, which he retained for two years. In 1860, he was restored

to the effective ranks, and was appointed to Florence charge, which he served for two years, and the two following years, he preached at Constantia. During these four years, he labored successfully, and was much beloved by the people on both charges, but in the latter year, 1864, his health having again partially failed, he was again returned superannuated, but was employed by his presiding elder as a supply for his last charge, to labor as his strength would allow. While laboring as a supply, and favoring himself as much as possible, he so far recuperated in health that at the conference of 1865, he ventured to take an effective relation again, and was appointed to Central Square, where he labored very acceptably the entire constitutional term of three years. In 1868, he was appointed to New Haven, where he also served the full term of three years, and, in 1871, he served the Durhamville charge, and the following year, he was appointed to Vienna, which proved to be his last field of labor.

During the year, the ministers on Rome District, to which Vienna was attached, had resolved to hold their annual district camp-meeting at that place. As might be expected, Brother Holmes entered heartily into the work of preparation, and with his people was anticipating a glorious time, with abundant showers of grace. But in laboring, physically, he, no doubt, over-taxed his strength, and a few days before the meeting began, he was prostrated by sickness, but he hoped to rally, and obtain strength sufficient to enable him to attend the meeting during a portion of the time. But the meeting opened and progressed, and although many prayers were offered for his recovery, and every exertion in the power of friends and sympathizing brethren was made to save him to usefulness and the church, all efforts proved abortive, and his placid spirit passed away on the Sabbath of the camp-meeting to that brighter home and more inviting gathering near to the throne of God!

Thus died in the 46th year of his age and the 18th of his ministry, August 18th, 1872, our brother, Henry S. Holmes,

of whom it may truthfully be said, "He is gone, but not lost."

We append an article clipped from a secular newspaper, giving an interesting account of his funeral :

"Another very interesting incident of the meeting was the funeral services of the Rev. H. S. Holmes, which took place on the camp-ground on Tuesday, at 2 P. M. The deceased was the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church at McConnellsville, and a member of the camp-meeting committee—had assisted in the preliminary arrangements for the camp-meeting, and was anticipating much pleasure in attending the same. But it was otherwise ordered. Two weeks since he was stricken down by dysentery, which baffled all medical skill, and on Sunday last he died, sweetly trusting in the Christ he had so fervently preached, in the 46th year of his age.

At the request of preachers and people, the funeral services were held on the camp-ground. The day was beautiful, and the number present could not have been less than 2,500. The bearers were Revs. W. Searls, R. Flint, J. Zimmerman, H. Nichols, J. W. Simpson and A. M. Roe. The pulpit and stand were tastefully draped in black by the ladies on the ground, black shawls being used for the purpose. The singing was done by the choir of the church of Camden, under the direction of Mr. Geo. E. Spink, of Western. The prayer was offered by Rev. H. M. Danforth, of Camden; reading the scriptures by Rev. J. H. Lamb, of Sandy Creek; reading of the hymn by Rev. H. Skeel, of Sauquoit.

"Rev. B. S. Wright, the presiding elder, preached the sermon from the text found in Prov. xiv, 32: 'The righteous hath hope in his death.' The sermon was appropriate to the occasion and was listened to with profound attention. The presiding elder paid a high tribute to the Christian character of the deceased.

"At the close of the sermon, Rev. W. Searls, of this city, made a few remarks descriptive of the pure character and great worth of his dead brother, which drew tears from nearly all eyes. He then alluded, in a most delicate manner, to the bereaved wife, and the struggle she must have before her, and proposed that the preachers of the district and the friends then present, should make an offering ex-

pressive of their sympathy with the bereaved, to defray the funeral expenses, and also to erect a suitable monument to commemorate the virtues of the dead. The idea was a happy one, and in a few moments, in perfect silence, the sum of \$130 was contributed. This will suffice for the purpose. It was a touching scene, and will long be remembered by all present.

"The meeting has been productive of good, and a considerable number have professed conversion."

We also insert a portion verbatim of the report of the committee on memoirs, which was prepared for and adopted by the conference at its next session in 1873—the committee being Revs. B. S. Wright and R. Flint. (We purposely omit such portions as embrace facts already alluded to.)

"Brother Holmes evinced by his daily life that he was a man of deep piety, and the result which attended the word spoken by him, showed him to be a successful minister of the gospel. His sermons were usually methodical and perspicuous, while in their delivery there was an impressiveness that had a tendency to convince the hearer that he was listening to a speaker who, himself, felt the force of the momentous truth which he was uttering.

"As a pastor, Brother Holmes excelled. He cherished an intense interest for the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer, and each member was the object of his special care, and he earnestly labored to promote their growth in grace, and to secure their final salvation. In the Sunday-school, he was a model worker. He was unswerving in his fidelity to the church, carefully looking after all her interests that were committed to his charge.

"As a husband he was true and loving—a model of kindness and affection. As a friend he was trustworthy and confiding; in him there was nothing like deception, nor was he ever known to betray a trust. His last earthly utterance was 'Oh! I am so glad that Jesus loves me.'"

His pious yet bereaved widow resides in Racine, Wisconsin, and in writing to the author of these Memorials, speaks of these volumes, "that will be highly prized when completed," and of that glorious re-union in the better country, and adds, "I often long to be there!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

REV. FRANCIS D. HIGGINS.

THIS good brother was admitted into the Oneida Conference in the year 1839, and was stationed at Brookfield; 1840, at New Berlin. In 1840, having passed the requisite examination in his conference studies and also before the bishop, he was received into full connection, and returned to his former field of labor in 1841; 1842, he was appointed to Exeter; 1843-4, to Westford; 1845, to Otego; 1846-7, to Plymouth. For the three following years, he was superannuated; 1851, he was made effective, and stationed at Guilford. In 1852, he located, and retained that relation three years; 1855, he was re-admitted, and sent to Pratt's Hollow and Bouckville; 1856, to Plymouth again; 1857-8, to Earlville; 1859-60, to Hamilton; 1861-2, Ludlowville; 1863, New York Mills; 1864, Oriskany Falls. From 1865 to 1868, he sustained a supernumerary relation to the Oneida Conference. In 1869, he became a member of the Central New York Conference by virtue of his location, which relation he retained until the formation of the Northern New York Conference in 1872. In 1873, he was superannuated at the first session of the Northern New York Conference, and a few months afterward, he ended his earthly pilgrimage at Bouckville, Madison County, N. Y., on the 22d day of August, 1873, aged sixty-five years, having served the church acceptably for twenty-one years as an effective itinerant preacher, and suffered and labored as a superannuate or supernumerary for twelve years—thirty-three years in all, or an entire generation.

Brother Higgins was a comparative stranger to the most of the brethren in the Northern New York Conference as he had just come among us, and there was little opportunity

of forming a mutual acquaintance. His last days also were spent, and his death occurred, beyond our bounds, so that but little was known of him by his fellow members of the Northern New York Conference. He was, however, a good man, and no doubt has "gone to the land of spirits bright, to taste its pleasures there."

CHAPTER XLIV.

REV. EBENEZER PEASE.

BROTHER PEASE, who was well advanced in years at the time of his decease, had comparatively a short history as an effective traveling minister. He did not join the conference till in middle life, and during many of his latter years, he was either a supernumerary or superannuated preacher, but while able to labor in the effective work, he adorned his profession as a minister of the gospel.

He was born in Georgia, Vermont, September 9th, 1802. He was the fifth in a family of eleven children. When seven years old, his mother died, and when nine years of age, he went to live with a Mr. Tracy, in Shelburn, Vt., with whom he remained till he was twenty-one. Mr. Tracy was not a professor of religion, neither was he an opposer, but a believer in the truths of divine revelation.

Brother Pease was married December 21, 1826, to Miss Catharine McCoy, and she died January 27th, 1829. She died of consumption, after a short married life of less than three years. She was buried in South Hero, Franklin County, Vt. December 31, 1829, he married for his second wife, Miss Sally T. Kinney, who died in Chateaugay, Franklin County, N. Y., April 16th, 1847, and was buried in Brasher, St. Lawrence County, N. Y. He was married to

his third wife by Rev. R. E. King, October 11th, 1847. Her name was Miss Nancy Healey—the marriage taking place in Stockholm.

While in Vermont—when about fourteen years of age—Mr. Tracy lent him a Bible, and told him when he had read it through, he would present him with a new one, and before he had finished reading it, he saw himself a poor, condemned sinner, and was led to give his heart to God. In 1823, he received an exhorter's license, authorizing him to exhort on Grand Isle Circuit—Rev. Solomon Stebbins being the preacher. In the latter part of the same year, his license to exhort was renewed by the quarterly conference, the justly renowned Buel Goodsell being the presiding elder. He received license to preach February 14th, 1827, from the same quarterly conference, and under the same presiding elder.

He removed from South Hero to the town of Brasher, St. Lawrence County, N. Y., in 1838. Before his removal to New York State, he had been ordained as a local deacon by Bishop Thomas A. Morris at a session of the Troy conference, and subsequently as an elder by Bishop Hamline in 1844, at Potsdam. In 1848-9, he traveled Bombay Circuit, Franklin County, which then included the town of Brasher, the place of his residence. The author was preacher in charge, and Brother Pease was employed by the presiding elder as a supply to assist the former, who proved him to be a faithful and efficient fellow-laborer, possessed of a good, warm heart, with a pious and prudent wife, and enjoying all the comforts and delights of a quiet, happy home on his little farm, on which he labored for some years with his own hands, and preaching gratuitously whenever called upon. At length, feeling it his duty to devote himself exclusively to the work of the ministry, after being properly recommended by the quarterly conference, he was, in the year 1845, admitted on trial by the Black River Conference, and sent to Chateaugay Circuit. He was, in 1846, returned to

Chateaugay Circuit. The following year, he was appointed to Heuvelton and Depeyster Circuit. At the conference of 1848, he was received into full connection, having been ordained already as a local elder. 1848, he traveled Massena Circuit, and in 1849-50, Lisbon Circuit; 1851-2, Bangor Circuit; 1853, Hopkinton; 1854, Helena or North Brasher.

The following year, 1855, he was made supernumerary, and retained this relation for six years, or until the year 1860. At the conference of 1861, he was superannuated, and retained this relation until the time of his decease. On being appointed to his last charge, Helena or North Brasher, he moved onto his farm in the Quaker Settlement, in Brasher, where he and his family remained until 1866, when the family removed to Lawrenceville, where he died in peace, December 1st, 1873, after an illness of one week. Some years previously, he was taken down by the measles, which seemed to settle in one of his legs, and from which he never fully recovered. Soon after his removal to Lawrenceville, his mind seemed to give way so as to render him incapable of doing business, although able to be around and do some work in the garden for two or three years.

His object in moving to Lawrenceville was to give his children the advantages of the academy in that pleasant village. It is proper to add at this point that Brother Pease had by his last wife four children—three daughters and one son, the latter of whom died in early infancy, but a boy of the same age was adopted by the family and has always remained with them.

As time passed away, Brother Pease continued to decline, both in body and in mind, so much so that he said but little, except when asked a question, and even then a reply would not always be made. His memory also had become dormant. He asked for nothing; all his wants were anticipated by his kind-hearted family, who waited upon him with the most assiduous attention, and bestowed upon him all the care that conjugal and filial affection could inspire. But

nature at last yielded, and as before stated, he sank to rest in the quiet sleep of the grave, aged seventy-one years. His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Samuel Call, presiding elder of Potsdam District, from 2d Timothy, 1, 10:—"Who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel." His remains were conveyed to Brasher, and buried on a part of his farm, where they will sweetly and quietly rest until mortality is swallowed up of life.

In the life, labors and character of Ebenezer Pease, there was much to admire, and nothing to condemn. He was emphatically a good man and so acknowledged to be by all, whether professors of religion or otherwise. All acknowledged his sterling integrity and singleness of purpose. To do good and benefit humanity was his constant aim, and although not a brilliant man, either as it regards learning or eloquence, he was a man whom the people could safely trust, and whom they did trust in all things, whether secular or religious. He was an indefatigable worker, whether in the pulpit or on the farm. Whatever his hands found to do, he did it with his might, and he thus often overtaxed his strength, both physical and mental, and no doubt hereby prepared himself for the reception of those germs of disease that terminated his life.

As a husband and father, he was kind, conciliatory and affectionate, doing all for the comfort and convenience of his family that he could do. His last days were clouded by mental weakness and loss of memory, but from the well-known tenor of his life, his Godly conversation, his prayerfulness and steadfastness in the faith of the gospel that he preached as long as health would permit and reason sat upon its throne, there cannot be a lingering doubt, but what he has gone up to join the enraptured hosts in glory-land, where the mental faculties are no more impaired by disease, but where we "shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known." Heaven grant that all our readers may fall asleep as safely as our departed Brother Pease.



REV. E. WHEELER.

CHAPTER XLV.

REV. ELISHA WHEELER.

THE author, or perhaps more properly, the compiler of these Memoirs, enjoyed for several years a limited acquaintance with the distinguished minister whose name stands at the head of this chapter. He knew him in the prime of life, when in the zenith of his usefulness and manly strength and activity. He knew him also when he became physically feeble and had lost much of that mental and physical strength with which he was at an earlier period of his life so richly endowed by nature and by grace. Our acquaintance was first formed in 1836, at the first session of the Black River Conference, when the author was but a youth of 23 years of age, and Brother Wheeler was one of the strong men in the conference, and truly, we had "giants among us in those days." Such men as Dempster, Chase, Baker, Salisbury, Ninde, A. D. Peck, J. T. Peck, Gary, Puffer, Luther Lee and others, were men of acknowledged power and moral worth, and Brother Wheeler was, as above stated, a strong man among them, and like them, spent a long life of usefulness in the ministry of the church of his choice, doing good to the bodies and the souls of men. We regret, however, that in the preparation of this work our *material* in this case is so scanty that we shall have to fall back mostly on the records of conference as furnished in the minutes, and especially upon the obituary written by our lamented brother, Rev. Gardner Baker, for the *Northern Christian Advocate*.

We will first insert the conference Memoir :

Rev. Elisha Wheeler.

"Elisha Wheeler was born in Mansfield, Mass., Nov. 17th, 1796. In his early childhood, his parents emigrated to

Northern New York, and settled near the site of the present village of Boonville, Oneida County. Here, at the age of 14, he was converted, and united with the Baptist Church. The society with which he united, in a few years became extinct, and he remained without any visible relation to the church, till 1824, when under the ministry of the Rev. Squire Chase, he was reclaimed from a partially backslidden state, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was one of the six persons of whom the first Methodist society in the village of Boonville was composed. He was studious and zealous, and soon developed 'gifts' and 'grace' which clearly indicated what would be his life calling. In 1826, he was received on trial in the Genesee Conference, at its session in Palmyra, and appointed to Indian River Circuit, with Jonathan Brooks. In 1827, he was appointed to Sandy Creek Circuit with James Brown. In 1828, he was received into full connection, and ordained deacon at Ithaca. In 1829 and 1830, he was stationed on Salmon River Circuit. In 1830, at Utica, he was ordained elder by Bishop Hedding. From this time his appointments were as follows: 1831-2, Oswego; 1833-4, Paris; 1835-6, Herkimer; 1837, Lowville; 1838, Vienna; 1839, Trenton; 1840-41, Steuben; at the conference of 1842, he asked and received a location; in 1845, he was re-admitted, and stationed at Belleville; 1846-7, Rodman; 1848, Weedsport; 1849, Victory; 1850, Cato; 1851, Red Creek; 1852-3, Canton; 1854-5, West Stockholm; 1856-7, Fort Covington; 1858, Brasher; 1859, Nicholville; 1860, Pillar Point; 1861, Evans Mills; from 1862 to 1864, he was superannuated; at the conference of 1864, he was again placed on the effective list, and stationed at Ellisburgh; after serving this, his *last* station, three years, he was again placed on the superannuated list, but continued to reside at Ellisburgh till removed to his home above. He died at his home in Ellisburgh, Nov. 13th, 1874, within a few days of 78 years of age.

"Brother Wheeler was an able minister, and in his early prime, especially, was very successful in the conversion of sinners, and in building up the church. Many of the flourishing societies in this region were planted under his administration. Near fifty years ago, he formed the first Methodist society in the village where he died. Most of those who were members of the society at that time had

preceded him to the spirit world, and their ashes sleep in the village graveyard. In there midst have been deposited the mortal remains of their former beloved pastor. Together their dust will slumber till the last trumpet shall sound and

‘Morning shall dawn on the night of the grave.’

G. BAKER,
Chairman Committee.”

We next give to the reader the obituary written by Father Baker, excepting some portions that are covered by the Memoir :

The Late Rev. Elisha Wheeler.

“It has seemed to me that a more extended notice is due to the memory of our departed Brother Wheeler than has yet appeared. He was one of the fathers of the church in this region. Amid sacrifices and privations, to which the present generation of preachers are strangers, he toiled to prepare fields in which his successors are reaping golden harvests.

“Brother Wheeler was born in Mansfield, Mass., November 17, 1796. In his early childhood, his parents emigrated to Northern New York, and settled near the site of the present village of Boonville, Oneida County. This region was then just emerging from a wilderness state. Here, at the age of fourteen, Elisha was converted, and united with the Baptist Church. The society with which he united, it seems, in a few years became extinct, and he remained without any visible relation to the church, and in a partially backslidden state, till 1824, when, under the ministry of Rev. Squire Chase, of precious memory, he was reclaimed, and became one of the six persons of whom the first Methodist class in Boonville was composed. Young Wheeler was studious and zealous, and soon developed ‘gifts’ and ‘graces,’ which clearly indicated what would be his life-calling.

“In 1826, he was received on trial in the Genesee Conference, at its session in Palmyra, and appointed to Indian River Circuit, in Black River District, with Jonathan Brooks. The Black River District at that time extended from Oneida County to Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence river, and from Salmon river to Chateaugay and the Great Wilderness, comprehending about one-half of the territory now included in the

Northern New York Conference. The Indian River Circuit extended from Champion to within six miles of Ogdensburg, and embraced more territory than is now included in any presiding elder's district in the conference. In 1827, he was appointed to Sandy Creek Circuit with James Brown. In 1828, he was received into full connection, and ordained deacon at Ithaca, and continued in the regular work, with but little interruption, down to 1867, when he was placed on the superannuated list, but continued his residence at Ellisburgh till his death in 1874.

"Brother Wheeler's individuality was strongly marked. His character and history were emphatically his own. Though not classic in his attainments, he had by reading and study acquired a fund of knowledge which entitled him to the respect of all who knew him. He was especially well informed on subjects relating to the church, its history, doctrines and institutions. While he was not wanting in charity towards other churches, he was a staunch defender of Methodism. Early in his ministry he made himself familiar with the arguments usually employed against popular errors. He was a careful reader of Mr. Wesley's Sermons, Fletcher's Checks, Watson's Theological Institutes, and works of this class. He was not disputatious, but always ready for argument.

"Fifty years ago, Methodism had to make its way against stronger and more pronounced opposition than it encounters at the present day. Scarcely a year passed, but in one form or another on his large circuit, the itinerant was obliged to take the field as a controversialist, or be branded as a coward, and allow the truth to suffer. At such times, Brother Wheeler's colors were always flying, and his sword was sure to find the weakest place in the armor of his antagonist. If he did not, to the letter, keep his promise made at the time of his ordination to 'drive away all strange and false doctrines,' it was not because he did not try to do it.

"In the pulpit, Brother Wheeler was distinguished for strength rather than ornament. Logic was more to his taste than rhetoric. He was not what is sometimes called a 'revival preacher.' He sought access to the hearts of his hearers through the understanding rather than the passions. It must not be inferred from this, however, that his ministry was barren of results—that he was not successful in winning souls to Christ. In his early prime, especially, as some of

the older members of the church will well remember, revivals (reformatations we used to call them,) frequently accompanied his ministry. The foundations of many of our flourishing societies in Northern New York were laid under his pastoral administration.

“Of the particulars of his last sickness and death, I am not well informed. I have no doubt his death was peaceful and safe. A good life is much more to be relied on as evidence of preparation, than any amount of death-bed manifestations; though the latter are very desirable and very pleasant, both to the dying and the living, when they accompany the closing up of a good life.

“Brother Wheeler was one of a family of seven children, three of whom, together with the parents, are believed to have died in the faith, and entered into rest. One of the remaining is the devoted wife of Rev. O. Squire, a superannuated member of Northern New York Conference, and residing in Clyde, Sandusky Co., Ohio. Brother Wheeler was married three times. By the first marriage, he had several children; one only survives him. It has often been remarked that Brother Wheeler was exceedingly fortunate in his marriages. His first and second wives were most estimable Christian ladies. And if I should say the Sister Wheeler who survives him is not inferior to either of them, some might call it flattery, but none would dispute the correctness of the statement. May God bless her and comfort her in her loneliness!”

To the above copious extracts, the author will only add that our brother departed was a good man, and piously devoted to his work. Having been his presiding elder for several years, while Brother Wheeler was stationed within the bounds of Potsdam District, namely, at West Stockholm and Fort Covington, the author had frequent opportunities of enjoying the hospitality of Brother Wheeler and his excellent lady, and of forming a more intimate acquaintance with them and the family. Brother Wheeler was always sociable and kindly in his disposition, and made firm and fast friends wherever he went.

Of the particulars of his last sickness, not given in the obituary, and some other important matters, the author is

indebted to the Rev. Henry Ernst, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ellisburgh, for information. As before stated, Brother Wheeler was married three times. His first wife's maiden name was Miss Susan Wheeler, to whom he was married in 1821, and who died in 1858. By this lady he had nine children—eight sons and one daughter. One of the sons, Addison F. Wheeler, has for some years been in the ministry, and now preaches at Freeville, Tompkins County, N. Y. The rest of the children are dead. He married for his second wife Mrs. Rachel Cozens, April 10, 1859, who died in Ellisburgh, August 17th, 1865, and lies buried beside her husband in Ellisburgh cemetery. He married for his third wife—who still survives—Miss Sophronia Chamberlain, April 10th, 1866. They were married by Rev. Byron Alden, who was then preaching at Belleville.

The following particulars of his last sickness have been obtained from the same source as the above. He had been failing all summer, looking pale and feeble—something unusual for him. October 9th, 1874, he preached in Belleville, three miles distant from his home. His text was, "Enoch walked with God." This proved to be his last sermon, and in it he remarked that his stay on earth would be short, which also proved true. On the following Tuesday, he walked from his house to the village, an eighth of a mile distant. On his return, he was obliged to cling to the fence for support. For three weeks after this, he was able to walk around in his door-yard. Then he was confined to his room for two weeks, suffering very much, but bearing it patiently and calmly. His disease was dropsy, disease of the heart and erysipelas. His last words were: "I suffer; but I shall soon be through!" and then quietly passed to his reward on high. His funeral services were held in Ellisburgh, his funeral sermon being preached by Rev. H. E. Chase, pastor of the church, to a large congregation.

"Spirit, leave thy house of clay,
Lingering dust, resign thy breath;

Spirit, cast thy chains away,
Dust, be thou dissolved in death,
Thus the mighty Saviour speaks,
While the faithful Christian dies;
Thus the bands of life he breaks,
And the ransomed captive flies."

CHAPTER XLVI.

REV. HARRIS KINSLEY.

THE subject of this sketch was born in the town of Leicester, Addison County, Vermont, on February 1st, 1806, and died in Independence, Iowa, March 4th, 1875, in the seventieth year of his age.

In a letter written by himself to his old friend and co-laborer, Rev. G. Baker, we learn that his father and mother both died when he was only six years old, and thus, at this early age, he was thrown upon the charities of a not too friendly or sympathizing world, but when father and mother had forsaken him, then the Lord took him up, and led him onward through a long and useful life, nearly to the allotted age of "three score years and ten." Of his early boyhood days, we know comparatively nothing. At the age of twenty, he experienced the pardoning mercy of God, at a quarterly meeting held in the town of Middlebury, Vermont, February 25th, 1826, and the next day in love-feast he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. From the time of his conversion, he appears to have applied himself closely to study, so that, in 1830, he received license as a local preacher at the hands of the Rev. Tobias Spicer, then presiding elder in the Troy Conference, his license bearing date June 1st, 1830.

After serving a few years and laboring as a local preacher in Vermont, he removed to the northern part of the state of

New York, where he formed an acquaintance with Rev. Silas Comfort, then presiding elder of Potsdam District in the then Oneida Conference, and by the presiding elder he was employed as a supply to travel Chateaugay Circuit, which he did for one year, commencing October, 1835, and was so successful in his work, and gave such promise of usefulness for the future, that he was duly recommended by the quarterly conference of Chateaugay as a suitable person to join the traveling connection. At the General Conference of May, 1836, the Black River Conference was formed by the division of the Oneida Conference, and at the first session of the former, held in Watertown, New York, in 1836, Bishop Waugh presiding, Brother Kinsley was duly received on trial as a traveling preacher, and at the same conference, having sustained the relation of a local preacher for four years, was elected and ordained a local deacon, and received an appointment to Theresa Circuit, in Jefferson County. On this charge, he acquitted himself acceptably, and had some success. At the conference of 1837, he was appointed to Sandy Creek, on which charge he remained two years, to the general satisfaction of the people.

At the conference held in Turin, in 1840, Bishop Hedding in the chair, Brother Kinsley was duly elected and ordained elder, having passed a very creditable literary examination before the usual committee, and at the same session admitted into full connection, and appointed to Clayton charge, where he labored successfully for two years. His next appointment was to Rodman, in Jefferson County, where he also bestowed two years' efficient service. At the conference of 1843, he was stationed at Copenhagen, where he remained one year, and then was stationed at Washingtonville, in Oswego County, where he remained during the conference years of 1844 and 1845. In 1845, we find him at Williamstown, where he remained one year, and in 1846, at Clay, where he labored one year. His next successive appointments, where he labored successfully for two years in

each place, were Palermo, Lysander, Red Creek, Rose and Hannibal, which completed his active ministerial life.

At the conference held in Jordan, in 1858, his health had so far failed that he was under the necessity of asking for a superannuated relation, which was freely granted to him by his brethren, after having served the conference as a fellow laborer for twenty-two years. From the period of his reception into the conference, his health had always been feeble, and yet during the score or more of years in which he served the church in a ministerial capacity, he was assiduous in the discharge of every known duty, and in his attention to all the interests of the church and the flock over which he had been placed by the Great Shepherd of souls.

After his superannuation, with a view of benefiting his health and providing for his family, he removed to Independence, Iowa, where he endeared himself to the church in that locality by his Godly life and example. He continued to preach as often as he was able, to the satisfaction and edification of the people. Nor did he limit his labors to the pulpit, but after he became unable to preach, he would frequently, during seasons of revival interest, visit from house to house, several families each day, and thus help on the good work. While in Iowa, he endured several attacks of paralysis, which rendered him insensible a portion of the time, but in his lucid moments, he plainly showed that he was a stranger to the fear of death. To him the last enemy had lost his sting, and he found himself in momentary readiness to depart and be with Christ. Although his vocal organs were almost entirely paralyzed, in the few broken sentences that he found strength to utter, he evinced strong affection for his family, and confidence in his blessed Saviour. And thus this good man passed peacefully away from earth's rough and stormy scenes to the haven of eternal calm and sunshine, leaving behind him a widowed wife and two young daughters, all of whom are,

we trust, walking in the footsteps of piety, as marked out by their father and husband. May his mantle of love fall on his younger surviving brethren in the ministry !

CHAPTER XLVII.

REV. JOHN STARR GEORGE.

“REV. JOHN STARR GEORGE was born in Albion, Oswego County, New York, January 30th, 1833, and died at Scriba, New York, April 14th, 1875, aged 42 years.

“The early life of Brother George was spent at Pulaski, where he was converted in March, 1851, at the age of eighteen. From an early age he was desirous of securing an education and especially after his conversion, bent all his energies in this direction. He supported himself in school by working at the carpenter’s trade and by teaching—attending first the Mexico Academy, and afterward, for several terms, the Falley Seminary, at Fulton, New York.

“During his student-life he was faithful to God and his convictions, and had the respect and confidence of both his instructors and fellow students. He received a license to exhort, in March, 1861, and the following spring was licensed to preach, and recommended to the annual conference, held in Oswego; from this session he received his first appointment, at North Bay, where he labored successfully two years.

“In the spring of 1863, he was married to Miss Kizzie M. Wells, of Granby, who now survives him. He was subsequently stationed three years at Orwell, two at Remsen, two at Clayville, three at New Haven, and, at our last conference, at Scriba, where he closed his earthly labors, just two weeks before our present session.

Brother George was never strong, physically, always looked frail—always *was* frail—and yet he never excused himself from work on account of bodily weakness; he did a *man’s* work to the last. Many would have excused themselves from the work of the ministry months or even years before he did, for watchful friends saw long ago that con-



REV. J. S. GEORGE.

sumption had marked him for a victim; he was advised to cease awhile from the active duties of his calling and seek needed rest and recuperation, but he felt the urgent claims of the ministry, and worked on cheerfully, but no doubt painfully, until he reached, sooner than he thought, the border land, 'Where toil is o'er and rest begins,' and almost literally 'ceased to work and live.'

He was a man of amiable characteristics, had a smiling face and a loving heart; he loved his people and was warmly esteemed and ardently loved in return. He was a *peace-maker*: if he found a society inharmonious, it was his delightful mission to pour oil upon the troubled waters and restore harmony and good feeling; and this he accomplished, not more by his teaching than by the beauty and serenity of his own life of faith upon the Son of God.

He held to life with great tenacity, desired to live that he might *work* for the Master, and care for his little family, but when he was assured by his physician that death was inevitable and near, he received the intelligence calmly, arranged his affairs carefully, and made preparations for his funeral and burial as though he were going a journey. As he neared the end he said: 'I am a great sinner saved by grace;' and a little after, he enquired what day of the month it was, and when told that it was the 14th of April, he said: 'It is a good time to go up to glory; cheer up, the day is breaking. Tell my mother all is well; Jesus is so precious to me; I am almost through; we shall be home soon. Tell the people I want them all to seek the Saviour.' A little later he said: 'I never thought I could draw near to death and feel so calm.' "

"Such like expressions of calm trust and holy triumph fell from his lips as he neared the river. His life went out with the day. As the sun set, and his last rays made a beautiful twilight in the room where loved ones were watching, his happy soul went up to God.

'So fades the summer clouds away,
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day
So dies a wave along the shore.'

ELIJAH HERR, JR."

We have thus transferred to our pages the above well-written and excellent Memoir furnished by the good

brother whose name appears at the close. It is brief, yet comprehensive, and includes all that seems necessary to say in regard to our dear brother departed. "May our last end be like his!"

Since preparing the above short sketch, the author has received from the respected widow of Brother George, the following additional facts: At the time of his death, Brother George left behind him two children as orphans, a son nearly eight years old, and an infant daughter aged one and a half years. His own father died when he was twelve years old, and ever after that event, the subject of this Memoir was under the necessity of providing for his own wants, and seeking his own education. He has a brother who is a member of the Michigan Conference, viz: Rev. Y. Y. George, who is a useful and talented minister.

Brother George was greatly beloved by his bereaved family; but although his widow feels her loss so sadly, she trusts in that God, who is in an emphatic sense the God of the widow and the fatherless.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

REV. BENJAMIN I. DIEFENDORF, A. M.

THIS somewhat eminent minister and educator was born in Frey's Bush, near Fort Plain, in the year 1809. He was converted at the early age of six years, and he at once consecrated his life to the service and cause of Jesus Christ. Early in life, he devoted the most of his time to the acquirement of such an education as would qualify him for the most extensive usefulness in his subsequent life. Being convinced, young as he was, that "knowledge is power," or

at least one of its chief elements, he resolved to obtain a liberal education ; for this purpose, he attended the Oneida Conference Seminary at Cazenovia, and remained long enough to qualify himself for admission to college. Accordingly, when his academic course was completed, he was received into the Wesleyan University, in Middletown, where he graduated in the year 1833, in the first class that received the degree of A. M. from that institution. Having completed his college course with honor to himself, he resolved to devote his active life to the cause of education. Hence, in 1834, he became a professor in the Wesleyan Female Seminary, and afterward in Wilbreham Academy. In 1835 and 1836, he was principal of Dudley Academy, in Massachusetts. In 1837-8-9, he was principal of Fort Plain High School. His mind for some time had been exercised with the impression that the Head of the Church had something for him to do in the pulpit as well as in the school, and becoming fully convinced that this was a fact, he accepted license to preach as a local preacher, and in 1837, he was received on trial by the Oneida Annual Conference, and was appointed by the bishop to the charge of Fort Plain High School, as before stated.

In 1839, he was transferred to the Black River Conference and appointed as principal of the Mexico Academy in Oswego County.* The next year, 1840, he was received into full connection by the Black River Conference, and re-appointed to the charge of the same school. In 1841, he entered into the pastoral work, and was appointed to the charge of Jordan station, in Onondaga County ; here he remained one year, and in 1842, he was appointed preacher in charge of Herkimer Circuit, John Thomas being the second

*There is a discrepancy in the minutes of the Black River Conference in regard to the date of Brother Diefendorf's transfer from the Oneida to the Black River Conference. Also in regard to the date of his appointment on Herkimer Circuit. We have followed the dates in the body of the minutes.

preacher. He remained on this circuit two years, being favored during the latter year, 1843, with the assisting labors of Rev. Russell M. West as his colleague. In 1844, he was appointed to the charge of Herkimer and Frankfort, with the venerable John Roper as his assistant colleague, and in 1845, the same relations were continued. In 1846, he was stationed at Oriskany, between Utica and Rome, but before the year closed he was removed from Oriskany to fill a vacancy in the presiding eldership of Rome District, which latter office he filled with entire satisfaction during the years 1867-8-9. At the close of his term on Rome District, sickness compelled him to retire from the active work. During the conference year 1850, he superannuated, but in 1851, took an effective relation again and was appointed to Little Falls station, where he preached two years. In 1853 and 1854, his pastorate was Syracuse, first ward; 1855-6, he was stationed at Vienna; 1857-8, he was in charge of Arsenal Street Church, Watertown. In 1859, he was made supernumerary with an appointment, which he filled at Vienna. Perhaps the uninformed reader may not understand this relation of supernumerary with an appointment; let us explain: A supernumerary is one who cannot do full effective work, but can render some service. Our bishops in those days were prohibited from stationing effective preachers for a longer term than two years in any one place. Supernumeraries, however, might as such remain for a longer term. Brother Diefendorf had filled out his full term as an effective man at Vienna. As an effective minister he could not be returned to the same charge, but the people greatly desired his return, and his own inclinations drew him in that direction. By taking a supernumerary relation, the difficulty was at once removed, and thus he was appointed for a third year. Several cases like this have occurred during the history of the Black River Conference. Our good bishops did not always approve of such appointments, but like others, had sometimes to yield to the

pressure of the occasion. In 1860, he was again stationed at Herkimer, having been absent long enough to render him eligible. From 1861 to 1863, he was principal of Fort Plain Seminary, where he had taught so successfully nearly a quarter of a century previously.

He remained at Fort Plain, with the exception of one year, until 1871, when he returned to his farm, three miles from Fort Plain. Here he spent the closing years of his life, preaching in churches of different denominations in the adjacent villages, as occasion required or his health would permit. Man, however, never "continueth in one stay." However robust or physically strong at any period of life, not only increased age but growing infirmities will assail the strongest frame and rack the most symmetrical and perfect embodiment of manhood, until exhausted nature finally yields to the power of disease or sudden death, and passes away.

Our dear Brother Diefendorf, notwithstanding his almost herculean labors in the pulpit and in the schools, was not a strong man physically. He was rather below than above the medium stature, his frame of a slender build, but his eyes shone with intelligence, and goodness as well as intellectuality were displayed in every feature. Yet, he was but mortal, and after lingering a few years in pain, he found his work on earth was soon to end. His last sickness began in December, 1874, and as the winter advanced, it became evident that dropsy had settled in his system. His sufferings were very great, but he bore them in much patience, saying; "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." His constant prayer was for the unspeakable fullness of the blessing of the gospel. He died in great peace on his natal soil, in Frey's Bush, near Fort Plain, October 19th, 1875, aged 66 years.

His remains were borne to their final resting place by ministerial brethren, and calmly sleep in the cemetery at

Frey's Bush. He left a widow and four adult children, to mourn the loss of a worthy husband and kind father.

We are largely indebted to the Rev. Isaac B. VanVolkenburg, formerly of Frey's Bush, but now pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Norway, Herkimer County, and a member of the Northern New York Conference, for most of the foregoing information regarding our departed brother, as also for the excellent Memoir furnished by him for the minutes of the conference.

In reviewing the character of Brother Diefendorf, whether as a man, a Christian, a Christian minister or teacher, there is much that may justly be said in his praise. Simply as a man he was what nature made him, and in the bestowment of her gifts she was by no means niggardly. But the brightest intellects and the strongest mind will in time grow weak, and decrease in strength and vigor unless duly cared for by exercise. Our brother was a diligent student; he allowed no cobwebs to grow in the chambers of his mind, but applied himself with all the assiduity possible to the acquirement of knowledge. And hence he made himself a man of superior attainments and as a scholar, a man of power, and extended influence and usefulness.

As a Christian, he was what *grace* made him, and here we can more clearly perceive the coöperation of nature and of grace, for in the spiritual as well as in the natural, we "are workers together with God"—God's husbandry, God's building—and while he husbands and builds, man also has a work to do, in and for himself, and this work our brother Diefendorf performed both as regards his mental and moral nature. In an important respect he was a self-made man, while God was "working in him to will and to do of his own good pleasure." In a word, he was a pure, honest hearted child of God—without duplicity, without pride or ostentation; he was also without reproach.

As a Christian minister, he excelled, both as a preacher and a pastor. Although learned, he never attempted a dis-

play of learning in the pulpit, his soul revolted against the idea of display; he hid himself behind the cross, willing that Christ should be all in all, yet he was a strong, instructive preacher, and did not attempt to soften the truth or smoothen his tongue to gain the applause of men.

As an educator, he had but few superiors. Thoroughly versed in the classics, and in natural, mental and moral science, with an ability to impart instruction, and to guide the inquiring mind of youth in the pursuit of knowledge, he was well fitted for the important task of teaching.

“But he has gone to the grave,
And we will not deplore him.”

Let the faithful servant rest in his peaceful slumber,
“till morn shall awake on the night of the grave.”

CHAPTER XLIX.

REV. REUBEN REYNOLDS.

REV. REUBEN REYNOLDS was born in Wapping, Conn., July 25, 1791. His father dying, he was adopted into the family of James Howe when he was five years of age. His foster parents both dying when he was ten years old, he was left an orphan the second time. He was from childhood religiously instructed, having been baptized in his infancy. Of this, he wrote in one place: “I always thought I could not sin as cheaply as other boys, because my mother told me that I was baptized in my infancy, and dedicated to the service of the Lord.” When thirteen years of age, he was convicted of sin while reading the New Testament at school, and a few days after was so powerfully converted that he began to exhort those seated near him, and six of them also were converted. He then joined the Presbyterian Church,

but afterwards, hearing a Methodist preach, he borrowed a Methodist book of discipline, and another book written by Wesley, and, being persuaded, he says: "Of my own will, and on my own responsibility, I joined the Methodist Episcopal Church." This was in 1808.

In 1814, he was licensed to preach the gospel, and in 1821, having previously married, he was ordained as a local deacon by Bishop George. He then moved to Norwich, Chenango County, New York, where, laboring as a local preacher, he raised up a society of more than one hundred members, at the same time working with his own hands to support his family. Among the hundreds that were converted during those years under his ministry was Jesse T. Peck, now and for years an honored bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. From 1832 to 1836, he traveled circuits under the direction of the presiding elder.

In 1836, he was received on trial in the Black River Conference; was ordained elder in 1838, and admitted into full connection, and continued a member of the conference till the time of his death. His various appointments were as follows: 1836-7, he was stationed at Gouverneur; 1838, DeKalb; 1839, Carthage; 1840-1, agent of Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary; 1842-3, he was stationed at Ellisburgh; 1844-5, at Brownville; 1846-7, Palermo; 1848-9, at Butler; 1850-1, Cleveland; 1852, Liverpool; 1853, Geddes; 1854, Collamer; 1855, Central Square; 1856-7, superannuated; 1858-9, Huron; 1860 to 1864, superannuated; 1865, Constantia; 1866 to 1868, superannuated; 1869 to 1876, do., having served in the effective ranks thirty-three years, and overseeing sixteen different charges. He remained on the superannuated list till life with him closed, so far as earth is concerned. His death occurred at the residence of his son-in-law, Wm. I. Preston, Esq., of Brooklyn, New York, January 24th, 1876, aged seventy-four years.

Father Reynolds was one of the most cheerful, sweet-spirited men that we ever knew, and he retained this sweet-

ness of character down to old age. His appearance impressed one with the idea that he was indeed a patriarch. With his flowing locks of white falling down over his shoulders, his clear eye and rubicund countenance, he was a perfect picture of contentment and cheerfulness. He was also, in his more youthful days, a good singer, and a great admirer of sacred and social music, which he often indulged in with great delight. He was an excellent preacher and pastor, not only in the sense of being acceptable, but as being highly successful. It is said that at Gouverneur, during his second conference year, he asked the Lord that four hundred souls might be given him that year, and it was afterward ascertained that about that number had been converted. His sermons were always winning, and replete with loving words and invitations. As a scholar, he was not classically learned. Nevertheless, he was well informed on all points needful to him as a citizen or minister—indeed, he was a close student, and a great reader, with a retentive memory, all of which rendered him popular among the masses.

As a Christian, his piety shone out as clear and bright as the shining of the full-orbed, cloudless moon, so resplendent that all must fall in love with the charming scene of a man so deeply devoted to the well-fare of mankind.

As a husband and father, he was greatly beloved. Always fond and affectionate, he was like a sunbeam in his family, scattering light and heat at every step by continued acts of kindness and love. But he sleeps, dear fellow-laborer, in the peaceful tomb, and—

“There sweet be his rest, till He bid him arise,
To join the full chorus that gladdens the skies.”

NOTE.—The author has endeavored faithfully to obtain fuller data for this chapter, but regrets to say his efforts have been unavailing. Belonging to the same class in conference, the writer became greatly attached to Father Reynolds, and enjoyed many happy social seasons with him.

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CHAPTER L.

REV. NATHANIEL SALISBURY.

"NATHANIEL SALISBURY was born in Vermont in 1794. He was converted in Scipio, Tompkins County, N. Y., at the age of 25, and died in Rome, Oneida County, February 18th, 1876, aged 82 years, one month and seven days. His long life from the age of 29 years was spent in the traveling ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Those whose acquaintance with him extends back for only a few years will remember him as an old man, bending under the weight of years; infirm, paralytic and almost blind. But those who knew him fifty years ago, will remember a young man who had seen about thirty-two years of life, with a physical frame rather tall, slim and straight as an arrow. His motions were quick, his step elastic, and his whole expression so striking that a stranger on passing him would be likely to turn and take a second look at him. His youth was spent not in the schools but at hard labor in field and forest. His knowledge of books, therefore, was not extensive, but he possessed an ample store of strong common sense, and made a book of every man he met and every event that transpired around him. His memory was remarkably retentive. A lesson once learned was seldom lost through forgetfulness. His active habits formed in early life remained unchanged till he was laid aside by sickness. Call when you would, you would seldom find him unemployed. Brother Salisbury was a preacher for the masses. It may be said of him as was said of his great Master, 'The common people heard him gladly.' He never read his sermons. It is doubtful if he ever read a sermon in his life. But he was never at a loss for ideas or words to express them. He sometimes took into the pulpit a brief or sketch, but this as often as otherwise was entirely useless. As he warmed with his subject, and the divine unction rested on him, he became oblivious to his sketch, and gave the freest scope to the torrent of thought and feeling that welled up in his soul. His sermons partook largely of the hortatory. He excelled in exhortation. Whole congregations have often been moved under his powerful appeals like a forest in a tornado. In his happiest moods his



REV. N. SALISBURY.

powers of imagination were something wonderful. His images, though not always remarkable for their chasteness, were always bold and effective. Fifty years ago, at a camp meeting in the town of Champion, at which Bishop George was present, Brother Salisbury preached one of the sermons on Sunday. His text was Rev. 14. 6: 'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach,' &c. No subject could be better adapted to his genius. It opened an unbounded field for the play of his imagination. No words can describe the effect of the sermon on the large audience. The people wept—they laughed—they shouted, while the preacher carried them up and on with the angel in his circuit round the world. He usually found means to conduct his audience safely back from the giddy heights to which he had transported them, but sometimes, as in this instance, he left them to make their way back as best they could. There are old people in that vicinity who to this day often speak of Brother Salisbury's 'angel sermon.' A great revival followed that camp-meeting, the fruit of which is felt and seen at the present day.

"He was eminently a man of prayer. A single instance of his power in prayer will live long in the memories of those who were present and heard it. It was at the session of the Black River Conference at Pulaski in 1862. The war of the rebellion was raging. A flag-staff had been erected, and the stars and strips waved over the place where the conference held its sittings. It was a dark day for the country. The patriotism of the preacher was at fever heat. A public meeting was held under the auspices of a committee of the conference, on the state of the country. Brother Salisbury made the opening prayer. For a few moments he was deliberate, even hesitating, as if waiting for something; then the looked-for unction came, and the man of God was wrapt in audience with his Maker. He broke forth in such a strain of confiding, pleading importunity as made every one feel that God was in his servant's prayer. The house was full to overflowing. Many strangers were present who had not been accustomed to hear Brother Salisbury pray. Some said, 'We never heard anything like it.' One gentleman, a stranger, who had been standing in the vestibule, was heard to say, 'That man, whoever he is, ought to be President Lincoln's chaplain.'

"Brother Salisbury was very positive and pronounced in his

convictions. On any question under discussion he never left you in doubt as to the position he occupied. This intellectual trait sometimes exposed him to the charge of stubbornness. To yield a point gracefully when he could no longer defend it was a hard lesson for him to learn. But as years increased upon him, a change in this respect was observable. And for several years before he died, he was as docile and loving in his disposition as a little child. He possessed a remarkably vigorous physical constitution. Few men have to an equal extent enjoyed the blessing of uninterrupted health for so long a time. At a session of the Black River Conference at Fulton, Oswego County, in 1866, he suffered an attack of partial paralysis while in the conference room. From that time till he changed mortality for immortality, he suffered much, and needed constantly the helping hand of his friends. Though his organs of speech, sight and hearing were greatly impaired, he retained in a remarkable degree his intellectual powers. He said to a brother minister who called on him a few months before his death: 'I can't see much, nor hear very well, nor get about as I used to; but I can think. I am thankful for that. I spend my time thinking.' The closing year of Brother Salisbury's life was one of extreme feebleness. There was a gradual letting go his hold of life during the whole year. After the death of Sister Salisbury, he lived much in the unseen world. The years of long ago and the years of the bright hereafter were most in his thoughts. And often his conversation betrayed that not the present, but the past or the future was before him. It was a remarkable instance of this, when but a day or two before his death, imagining himself before a congregation, he announced his text, and in a full, clear voice preached for a few minutes a sermon on the Atonement. His voice rang clear and strong as it did fifty years ago; his quotations of Scripture were apt and full as if he had but that very day arranged them from the Bible; his points were clearly stated and fully argued, as if the salvation of a soul was depending on his efforts. With this outer world shut out, and his eyes opened to the glory of the world beyond, as he declared the gospel of a substitutional sacrifice for sin, he made a life reality of the words he had often sung:

"Happy, if with my latest breath
I may but gasp His name,
Preach Him to all, and cry in death,
'Behold, behold the Lamb.'"

“He was admitted on trial in the Genesee Conference in 1822, and was received in full connection, and ordained deacon in 1824. In 1826, he was ordained elder. He was employed on circuits eleven years; on stations, seventeen years; on districts as presiding elder fifteen years; was on the superannuated list, eleven years. He was once (in 1832) a member of the General Conference from the Oneida Annual Conference. Throughout his long life he maintained an unsullied reputation as a Christian and minister. And hundreds in the day of final reckoning will rise up and call him blessed.

G. BAKER.”

In reading the above Memoir from the pen of Brother Salisbury's life long friend, Brother Baker, the reader must be convinced of the wonderful oratorical powers possessed by this man. He was remarkably gifted in this respect, and when was added what we may justly term the Holy Ghost power, it made his appeals almost irresistible, and sometimes awful, constraining the congregation to feel, if not to say in audible language

“Lo, God is here, let us adore,
And own how dreadful is this place;
Let all within us feel his power,
And silent bow before his face.”

It may be desirable to give Brother Salisbury's stations in full, from year to year, so we append the following list of his appointments. In 1822, he was admitted on trial in the Genesee Conference, and appointed to Marcellus; 1823, to Manlius; 1824, he was received into full connection and ordained deacon and appointed to Black River Circuit; 1825-6, to LeRay and Watertown; in 1827-30, presiding elder of Black River District, in the then Oneida Conference; 1831-2, Watertown; 1833-4, Oswego; 1835, Rome; 1836, he fell into the Black River Conference, and was appointed to Watertown, where he remained in 1837; in 1838-9, LeRay Circuit; 1840-41, Watertown District; 1842-3, Gouverneur District; 1844, Watertown District;

1845-6, Adams District ; 1847, Oswego District ; 1848-9-50, Syracuse District ; 1851, Pulaski ; 1852, Syracuse ; 1853-4, Parish ; 1855, West Oswego ; 1856-7, Oswego District ; 1858, superannuated ; 1859, effective, stationed at South Mexico ; 1860, Central Square ; 1861, Phoenix ; 1862-3, New London ; 1864, Embargo Street, Rome ; 1865 to 1868, superannuated as a member of the Central New York Conference ; 1872-6, superannuated as a member of the Northern New York Conference, in which latter year he died as before stated.

Another veteran of the cross gone to glory ! Full of years, full of labors and full of triumphs ; he “ rests from his labors, and his works follow him.”

CHAPTER LI.

REV. WM. W. RUNDELL.

“REV. WM. W. RUNDELL was born in Norwich, Chenango County, New York, April 3d, 1794, and died in Mexico, Oswego County, March 28th, 1876, aged 82 years.

“Brother Rundell was converted when twenty-one years of age, in Plymouth, Chenango County, under the joint labors of Loring Grant and Elias Bowen. He joined the Genesee Conference in 1818 in connection with Andrew Peck and Zachariah Paddock—noble men of God, who have done long and effective service in the church of God. Brother Rundell was twenty-five years of age when he joined the conference. He was in the effective work thirty years, twenty-seven years superannuated, making in all fifty-seven years. He served the following charges : Longstreet, Canada ; Long Point, Canada ; return to Longstreet, St. Lawrence, Ogdensburg, Watertown, Fulton, Marcellus, Weedsport, Cayuga, Dryden, Lansing, Ledyard, Kellbyville and Scott. At the last place his health failed him, and he received a supernumerary relation, and took up his residence in Mexico, Oswego County, where he remained till he died.

Father Rundell's life was full of historic as well as religious interest. His conference relations date back beyond any member of this conference, and though his early years were spent in the Genesee Conference, yet he labored for years in the territory now occupied by this conference. One of his first circuits embraced a large portion of what is now the St. Lawrence District. He has traveled over much of the territory between the St. Lawrence and Susquehanna rivers, occupying several important charges, and witnessing in many of these places powerful revivals, and through his labors many precious souls were gathered into the garner of the Lord, many of whom, no doubt, he has greeted on the other shore. As a preacher, he was clear and calm, impressing his audience with deep sincerity. Integrity and tranquility were traits that characterized him through life, and shone forth with increased strength and lustre to the last. He was ardently attached and strictly adhered to the doctrines and economy of the Methodist Church, yet was charitable and generous to all. His life was emphatically that of a true Christian. True in doctrine, faithful in duty, consistent in life, he was fully ready when death came. The close of his life was exceedingly calm, impressing us with more than usual force.

‘How blest the righteous when he dies,
When sinks a weary soul to rest.’

“He approached death without a fear or murmur, talking of his affairs with all the calmness of a man deliberately calculating his worldly business, and then without a struggle quietly fell asleep in Jesus. Father Rundell was true to all the reformatory movements of the age, early espousing and faithfully laboring in the temperance cause, and inaugurating some of the first total abstinence societies in the state; he was the means of helping many to a better life and happier destiny. After he retired from the itinerant ranks, he engaged in the medical profession, and thus was enabled to gain a partial competency for his support, at the same time enlarging his field of Christian usefulness—for he was the same Christian man in the sick room that he was in his public ministrations as a preacher of Christ—winning the confidence and gaining the respect of all with whom he became acquainted. He is at last at rest. He is gone to reap the reward of the faithful in the land of peace.

S. P. GRAY.”

The above beautiful tribute to his memory is taken *verbatim* from the printed Memoir in the annual minutes, but as the record of his appointments during his long term of service is not very full, the reader will pardon the non-insertion of all his appointments, with the dates thereof, up to the time of his superannuation. As above stated, he joined the Genesee Conference in 1818, and was appointed to Young street, in Upper Canada; 1819, Long Point; 1820, admitted into full connection and ordained deacon, and appointed to St. Lawrence Circuit, New York; 1821, Victory Circuit; 1822, Wyoming; 1823, Ithaca; 1824, Bridge-water; 1825, Potsdam Circuit; 1826-7, Ogdensburg Circuit; 1828, LeRay and Watertown; 1829, Fulton. In 1830, he fell within the bounds of the Oneida Conference, and was re-appointed to Fulton; 1831-2, he preached in Marcellus; 1833-4, at Weedsport; 1835, Scipio; 1836-7, Dryden and McLean; 1838-9, Cayuga; 1840-1, Ledyard; 1842, Cayuga; 1843, Dryden; 1844, superannuated; 1845, made effective and appointed to Owasco; 1846-7, Kelloggsville; 1848, Spafford. From 1849 to 1868, he was superannuated. In 1869, he still retained his superannuated relation as a member of the Central New York Conference, and in 1873, by change of conference boundaries, he became a superannuated member of the Northern New York Conference, which relation he retained until his death in 1876.

His name is often mentioned by the older members of the church yet living, as a holy, useful minister, so that his precious memory is still sacred among the fathers and mothers in Israel.



REV. G. G. HAPGOOD, D.D.

CHAPTER LII.

REV. GEORGE G. HAPGOOD, D. D.*

GEORGE GRANT HAPGOOD was born in Petersham, Worcester County, Mass., February 11th, 1804. As a boy he was noted for his intense love of study and rapid progress in the acquisition of knowledge. At the age of 18, he was supposed to be in the first stages of consumption, and at this time his mind was seriously drawn to the subject of religion and the importance of making his peace with God, but he was not converted until he was twenty-one years of age, which important event took place in the town of his nativity. After his conversion he resolved to obtain a classical education and became a student in the Hadley and Amherst Academies in Massachusetts, teaching school each winter, as he had done previously for several seasons. At the age of twenty-three, believing that he could do better as a teacher, so far as wages are concerned, he came to the state of New York, where he commenced teaching in the village of Cazenovia, and where he taught school for a period of six months, and then united with the Methodist Episcopal Church in that village, under the pastorate of Rev. John Dempster, D. D., and in the autumn entered the Oneida Conference Seminary as a student. In the winter of 1827-8, he taught school in McGrawville, and in the spring returned to the seminary and was an assistant teacher until the close of that term, after which he entered Union College in Schenectady, then under the presidency of the highly distinguished and venerable Dr. Nott, as a junior. The following fall and winter, he taught school at Schodack Landing, and in the spring returned to

*The author tenders his acknowledgements to Mrs. Hattie H. Sawyer, of Nashua, N. H., a daughter of Dr. Hapgood, for extensive information in regard to her deceased father.

Cazenovia as a student. In the autumn of that year, he engaged as a classical teacher in the Rensselaer High School, then established in Cortland as a branch of the Rensselaer Institute at Troy, N. Y. Here he enjoyed rare facilities for acquiring a scientific education, as he also had in Scho-dack of obtaining an anatomical and physiological one, under two celebrated physicians with whom he boarded when there. He continued in the Rensselaer High School until the next spring, when he re-entered Union College, and graduated from that institution in July, 1830, having met all his academic and collegiate expenses, save about \$50 for college tuition, which he would not accept as a gift, but afterwards paid.

After graduation, he entered the office of Judges Stevens and Wood, in Cortland, as a law student, where he remained till called to take charge of a high school in Truxton, where he continued three years, meanwhile studying both law and medicine.

October 28th, 1830, he was married to Miss Marcia McGraw, daughter of Samuel McGraw, Esq., of McGrawville, N. Y., after whom the village was named. In 1832, his attention being called to the ministry, he was licensed to exhort by Rev. W. W. Ninde, and to preach by Rev. J. T. Mitchell in Cortland in 1833, and recommended to the Oneida Annual Conference for reception on trial. He was accordingly received the same year, 1833, and appointed as junior preacher to Bainbridge Circuit. The next year, 1834, he was elected principal of Mexico Academy in Oswego, and received an appointment thereto from the presiding bishop. Here he remained five years, or until the year 1839. From the latter year to the year 1843—four years—he was principal of the Cazenovia Seminary, and in 1843, he was appointed agent of the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Conn. In 1844, he was recalled to the principalship of Mexico Academy, which position he retained for two years. In 1846, having been connected with the Black River

Conference for the last ten years, he resumed the more direct duties of the ministry, and was appointed to Rose charge in 1846. 1847, he was stationed in Jordon, and in 1848, at West Oswego, where he remained two years. In 1850, he was stationed in Belleville, Jefferson County, and from 1851 to 1854, he was the presiding elder of Syracuse District. In 1855, he was presiding elder of Oswego District, where he remained but one year. In consequence of long-continued sickness in his family, resulting in the death of his eldest son and that of his wife, whom he buried in Mexico, and where he had previously buried an infant child, and his eldest daughter being in a consumption, he was induced to resign his presiding eldership and take the appointment of preacher in charge of Fairfield station, hoping thereby to give his children the advantages of the seminary in that place. Here he remained one year, and had the sorrowful task of burying his daughter there, who had been so long failing in health. In the meanwhile his own health had become greatly impaired so that at the conference of 1857, held in Potsdam, he was so feeble and so much prostrated physically, that while attending to his duties as a member of the body, he fell prostrate upon the floor of the conference, and was granted a superannuated relation, which he held for one year, which was spent by him as a year of study. At the next conference of 1858, he had so far recuperated in health that he took an effective relation to the conference, and was appointed to Marcy and Schuyler charge in the Rome District, with Rev. Gardner Baker as his presiding elder. The two following years, 1858-9, he preached at Delta, near Rome, and in 1860, went to Boonville charge. While here, consumption again invaded his family circle and took the eldest remaining child and daughter, a young lady just graduated from Cazenovia Seminary, whose remains were laid by the side of those of her brother in Mexico. In the midst of all these trials his faith in God's goodness and fatherly protection remained unshaken, and he softly said

“God’s will be done.” After leaving Boonville, he preached one year in Martinsburg, Lewis County, one year in Madrid, St. Lawrence County, and one year in Waddington, in the same county.

After closing his labors in Waddington, he took a superannuated relation again, and in 1865, accepted a position as professor of Hebrew, Latin and Theology, in Belleville Seminary and Albert University, in Belleville, Province of Ontario, Canada. These institutions were under the care and patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada. Here he remained for seven years, and at the expiration of his term, he returned to Syracuse, where he taught during two terms as professor of Hebrew in the Syracuse University.

On the last evening of 1875, he finished his great work of translating the Bible from the Hebrew, Greek, Chaldee and Samaritan languages, carefully collating each passage, line and word. This work had occupied all his leisure time for nineteen years, and which he greatly desired to live to finish; and his wish and prayers were gratified and answered in this respect. Under date of December 31st, 1875, he made the following entry on the last page of his well-worn Hebrew Bible:

“This night, after nineteen years, I have completed all the originals of all the Bible; all read, some more and none less than twice; each verse with all the septuagint, part of the vulgate, and all the marginal references, mostly in the original; the meaning of proper names; the history, geography, chronology and maps. *Laus Deo.*

GEORGE G. HAPGOOD.”

That same evening he attended the watch night meeting of the closing year, in the University chapel, and on the following Sabbath he attended church for the last time. On the 3d day of January, 1876, his last sickness commenced, which proved to be a complication of diseases of the heart and lungs, attended by dropsy. Seven physicians

were called in, but could not restore him. Having, however, somewhat rallied from extreme prostration, he, on the 27th of the following April, though unable to stand, yet by the help of Rev. F. J. Whitney, he performed the marriage ceremony for his eldest remaining daughter. On May 4th, he felt able to be removed to Apulia, New York, a few miles from Syracuse, so as to be with his only remaining son, and at this place, on the 17th of May, he calmly fell asleep in Jesus, aged seventy-two years. On the 20th of May, his funeral was attended at the residence of his son, the services being conducted by Revs. F. J. Whitney and J. B. Foote, the University teachers and others doing honor to his memory by a plentiful supply of beautiful flowers. He was interred in Mexico by the side of his wife. He left a family of one son and three daughters, one of whom has since joined him in the better land. She, too, died of consumption, and was buried in the family lot in Mexico. She was a bride of but little over four months. The children still living are his son, Charles H., Kittie E., and Mrs. Hattie H. Sawyer, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. At the next session of his conference, in Watertown, 1877, appropriate services were held in honor of his memory, and an excellent Memoir was prepared and presented to the conference by his old friend, Rev. Lemuel Clark, and adopted, and to which the author is largely indebted in preparing this chapter. It is proper here to state, before we go farther, that Brother Hapgood was ordained deacon in 1835, by Bishop Hedding, at Oswego, and elder in 1837, in Potsdam; also that he received his degree of A. M. in course from Union College, in 1830, and his honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity, in 1852, from the same college, both of which titles he was certainly worthy of, and we may add, justly entitled to.

Though Dr. Hapgood has left the society of his brethren and friends on earth, they feel that he is not lost but only gone before. He was truly a kind husband, a most affec-

tionate father and honest hearted Christian. As a pulpit orator he might not have been preëminent, but no one could listen to his expositions of God's Holy Word, without being instructed and edified. Although so many years of his valuable life were spent in study and teaching, after he had attained to manhood—nineteen years as an instructor—yet he was no novice in the purely pastoral work of the ministry, having given twenty of the best years of his life to this work, and while he laid no claim to eloquence, in its popularly received sense, nevertheless he had so studied as to show himself “a workman approved of God, that needeth not to be ashamed,” and he was not unsuccessful in this department of his work.

But it was as an educator that he excelled. The many years spent by him as a teacher of common schools, of academies, of seminaries, of colleges and universities, prove his full adaptability to the work of an educator, and scores, if not hundreds of men, once young, but now old or middle aged, will remember with thankfulness the lessons of instruction imparted by him while under his tuition.

As a Christian, and Christian gentleman, he was above reproach. He was emphatically a good man, humble and unassuming in his manner; the youngest and most inexperienced, whether in the ministry or laity, might approach him with the utmost freedom and confidence. He never made a display of his learning in public, but was satisfied to display his depth of knowledge only for the purpose, and in the work of imparting knowledge to others. At one of our conference sessions held in Watertown, the author was fortunate in being the fellow-guest of the Doctor, during the session, at the hospitable and pleasant residence of the Rev. Mr. Snyder, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Watertown. Our host was a deeply learned and amiable gentleman, and the interchange of thoughts and feeling in regard to the more abstruse questions of theology, literature and science were exceedingly interesting and instructive.

It proved to be a week of profit, especially to the humble author.

Shortly after being stricken down by his last sickness, on being asked why he bestowed so much toil and time on study, now that he was so near death, he replied, "Why, I am just getting ready to live," and surely this was even so. Getting ready to live! The three score years of earthly life had passed, but there was another life looming up before the vision of the dying saint that cheered and comforted his spirit while passing through the vale.

"Beyond this vale of tears
There is a life above,
Unmeasured by the flight of years,
And all that life is love."

CHAPTER LIII.

GEORGE DIXON GREENLEAF.

"REV. G. D. GREENLEAF was born in New Hampshire about the year 1810. His parents were members of the Baptist Church. Quite early in life he embraced religion, and at once commenced the active duties thereof. Soon after attaining his majority, he emigrated to Canada, and subsequently united with the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. Having carefully examined the position and deliberately and intelligently decided upon his course, nothing could induce him to abandon his church relations. In the various capacities of leader, exhorter, local preacher and pastor, he faithfully served that church for about twenty years. Many who were awakened under his ministration in that branch of the militant church and were seals of his ministry here, have preceded him to the glory-land. He was ordained to the office of deacon and elder by the late Rev. John Reynolds, bishop of the M. E. Church in Canada. Having located there, he in 1854, removed from Canada to this state, and was received on trial at the session of the

Black River Conference held at Potsdam, April, 1857, having been previously employed as a supply on Brasher charge. He served successively the Moira, Chateaugay, Massena, Madrid, Alexandria, Three Mile Bay, Depauville, Lee Center, Lowell, North Bay and Durhamville charges. Here his declining health compelled him, at the conference held at Carthage, April, 1874, to ask of the conference a superannuated relation, and he again sought among his former friends in Belleville, Canada, a home, hoping that respite from labors and cares might recuperate his failing energies, and that he might again engage in the work of the ministry. Earthly hopes are vain and often disappointed. It was so with this, and the continued decline of health warned him that his work was done, and the messenger of the Master was at the door to call him home.

"Gathering up his strength he, in the winter of 1875, returned to the home of his son in Moira, and from thence on the 18th day of May, 1876, he was transferred by the Master from labor in the church militant to the church triumphant; for God had said, 'My spirit shall go with you, and I will give you rest.' As a preacher, he was clear, concise and instructive. As a friend and brother, he was trusting and true. He loved Methodist discipline and the work of the Methodist itinerant, and 'studied to show himself approved unto God; a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' To his ministerial brethren who visited him in his last days, he expressed himself confident in the fullness of the salvation he had preached; cheerful in the blissful assurance of his acceptance with his God; and now, when all earthly hopes were receding from his view, the light of that glorious confidence shone clear across the dark river into the glory of Immanuel's land. The reflex of that light illuminated the valley where the shadows of death would have cast their influence over his pathway, and 'at evening time it was light.' Nervous paralysis in his last hours prevented his speech, and deprived us of any last expression of his hope; nor did we need this. His record is on high, and though he may no more mingle in our gatherings here, we are assured in our hearts we shall meet him where no farewell can disturb the conference in that land of peace. We may say with the poet:

" Servant of God, well done,
Thy glorious warfare's past,

The battle's fought, the victory won,
And thou art crowned at last.
Of all thy heart's desire
Triumphantly possessed,
Lodged by the ministerial choir
In thy Redeemer's breast."

CHARLES MANSON."

Brother Manson, the writer of the above appropriate conference Memoir, and who has long been a valued member of our conference, is well prepared to give his testimony to the moral worth of our departed Brother Greenleaf, as he was a fellow laborer with him in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. The writer also had some opportunity of a somewhat intimate personal acquaintance with brother Greenleaf, part of the time as his presiding elder, but mostly as a fellow resident of Potsdam, while he published a spirited newspaper sheet in the latter place, called the *Northern Freeman*, which had a good circulation, but was subsequently merged in the present *Courier and Freeman*, issued in Potsdam. Brother Greenleaf was himself a practical printer. Our brother was a good preacher, sound and orthodox on all points of Christian doctrine and morality, a man of good judgment, loyal to the land of his birth, and a true defender of *Episcopal* Methodism, whether on this side of the line or in Canada. He, no doubt, has gone to share in the rewards of the righteous in the courts of glory.

CHAPTER LIV.

REV. HORACE TREMAINE.

"REV. HORACE TREMAINE was born May 12th, 1803, in the town of Paris, Oneida County, New York. His father was a local preacher, whose house was the stopping place of the early Methodist itinerant, and the early class and church

found a place of meeting in the house of our brother. He used to say that his first memories were of the exercises of these holy convocations.

"In his own father's house, at the age of 14, he was converted to God, but was not gathered into the church till after the lapse of twelve years. Then, in a few months, he was appointed class-leader, in which office he was very successful; his class often numbered one hundred in attendance, and a continuous revival influence attended it. He was, in 1836, licensed to exhort, then by Rev. E. Bowen, the same year, to preach. He was admitted on probation in the Black River Conference at Turin, in 1839, and there and then ordained deacon. His first appointment was Canastota, with Rev. George Gary as presiding elder. By a change of conference boundaries, Canastota was in 1840 assigned to the Oneida Conference. In this new conference relation Brother Tremaine spent all his effective years. In 1840-41, he was stationed at Fayetteville; 1841 to 1843, at Morrisville. Here a glorious revival accompanied his preaching, and one hundred and fifty were converted; 1843-4, he labored at Camillus, and with his work came a glorious revival. The years of 1844-5, he spent at Fabius. The years 1845-6, found him again at Fayetteville. The next two years were spent at Hampton, where a gracious work of God encouraged the preacher. His next field was at West Winfield, and a blessed revival again cheered the man of God. New Hartford was his next field—1851. He volunteered to go to Lowell, at that time a forbidding field. He labored with heart, head and hands beyond his naturally great powers of endurance, and in the last half of his second year, 1853, he was smitten with paralysis. Since that time he has been superannuated, and since 1867, wholly unable to preach. He moved to Vernon, and then, in 1858, to Rome, where he has since resided. His final attack came Friday, March 23d, 1877. He fell in his door-yard, and never spoke after. He sank slowly, and on the Lord's Day, March 25th, 1877, entered into his blessed rest. The church of Rome greatly lamented the decease of this holy man. The funeral was attended at the First Methodist church in Rome. The day of the funeral was exceedingly stormy, but the church was well filled with attentive hearers, who by their presence testified to the hold he had on the affections of the people. The text selected by Rev. F. Wid-

mer, pastor of the church, was Hebrews 13, 7, 'Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation'—a most appropriate text, which was followed by an equally appropriate sermon."

Brother Tremaine was a good man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost; was a man of sterling worth, truly pious and devoted to the work of the ministry while able to do effective work, and after being laid aside by the infirmities of the flesh, retaining his zeal and love for the church, he always attended the means of grace when it was possible for him to be present. The later years of his life being by location connected with another conference, we were deprived of his presence and counsel at the most of our conference sessions, but we know that he lived well, died well, and has gone to join the hosts on high.

CHAPTER LV.

REV. CHARLES L. DUNNING.

THE subject of this short sketch was one of "nature's noblemen," both physically and mentally. He had a commanding presence, and possessed gifts and talents which, if not of the highest order, made him exceedingly popular both as a man and a minister.

He was born in Hudson, N. Y., December 12th, 1802. He came to Prescott, Upper Canada, now the Province of Ontario, in early life, and learned the trade of a carriage maker. While serving his apprenticeship in Prescott, opposite the then village of Ogdensburg, he was powerfully converted through the instrumentality of the Wesleyan Methodist preachers in Canada, and soon after cast in his lot with that people by becoming a member of that church. We

have often heard Brother Dunning try to explain the wonderful change that took place in his mental, moral and spiritual being at the time the mighty change was wrought. No exclamations of joy and ecstasy could be loud enough to express the degree of transport and love that pervaded his entire soul on the immediate result of that

“ Happy hour that fixed his choice
On Christ his Saviour and his God.”

While it would have been most appropriate for him to have added

“ Well may this glowing heart rejoice
And tell its rapture all abroad ;
Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away.”

We have often also, in our younger days, heard the good brothers and sisters on the Canada shore, especially in the vicinity of Prescott, tell of the great triumph secured by grace in the conversion of Charles L. Dunning. After his conversion, he removed to Oswego, N. Y., where he identified himself fully with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The particulars of his call to the ministry we have not been able fully to learn, but from our knowledge of the man we do not doubt that the same spirit that called him into the liberty of the gospel, also called him, as Saul of Tarsus was called, to spread a knowledge of that gospel among his fellow men without waiting for years to qualify himself by obtaining first a scholastic education. While residing in Oswego, he was recommended by the quarterly conference of that station as a proper person to travel and preach, and in the year 1833, he was admitted as a probationer into the Oneida Annual Conference, and was appointed to Onondaga Circuit. The following year, 1834, he was sent to the extreme northern portion of the conference, namely, Chateaugay Circuit, which then embraced quite a portion of Franklin County, and portions of Lower Canada, in towns lying con-

tiguous to the American boundary. At that time, the British Wesleyans did not occupy that territory with their preachers. In 1835, he was admitted into full connection by the Oneida Conference and ordained deacon. He received his appointment to Malone, the county town of Franklin County, where he had a glorious revival. In 1836, he became a member of the Black River Conference, and was returned to Malone the second year by Bishop Waugh. At the conference of 1837, held in Potsdam, Bishop Elijah Hedding, president, and Rev. Jesse T. Peck, secretary, he was ordained elder, and appointed to Canastota, in the extreme southern portion of the conference. On the 31st of October of this year, shortly after the session of conference, he was united in marriage in the town of Pompey with the lady who ever after shared with him fully and cheerfully all the vicissitudes and hardships of an itinerant life. And how great these hardships are, or rather were, in the earlier years of Methodism, those widows that now survive only know, or the aged matrons whose husbands may yet be lingering on the crumbling verge of time, can tell of the privations and anxieties of the lone partner of his life, he absent at his work of trying to bring sinners home to God.

In 1838 and 1839, Brother Dunning filled the important place of preacher in charge of Little Falls station, and at the end of the second year, his people would most gladly have had him returned for the third year, had the rules of the church permitted. The following two years, 1840-41, he was pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Oswego, where he labored with great zeal and fidelity, and with some success. From thence he was sent to Salina, then as now, an important adjunct of the city of Syracuse; here he remained two full years, 1842-3. From Salina, he went to Weedsport, and remained during the conference years of 1844-5. The two following years, 1846-7, he had charge of Fulton station, and in 1848-9, of Syracuse mission. In 1850, he was appointed agent of the Falley Seminary in

Fulton, and labored indefatigably to promote the interests of that celebrated institution of learning, which was patronized by the conference as a conference school. In 1851-2, he was appointed to West Oswego, so called to distinguish it from the charge on the east side of the Oswego river. In 1853-4, he again returned to Weedsport, as the attachment between him and the people there was exceedingly strong. The ensuing four years, he served the Ogdensburg District as presiding elder. On this district he felt much at home as he was universally beloved both by preachers and people. In 1859, he was again returned to his former charge in West Oswego, where he remained two years, and was then appointed to the charge of Oswego District in 1861, where he remained the full term of four years, with equal if not increased acceptability as a presiding elder. 1864, he was appointed to the presiding eldership of Potsdam District, where he also served the full term of four years. The author, being at that time subject to his jurisdiction, and being brought into close proximity with him frequently during his term of office, is prepared to say that the incumbent of that responsible position was in all respects honored and respected, and his services, by preachers and people, gladly received and duly appreciated.

At the close of his term on Potsdam District, he was removed in 1868, to Washingtonville, in Oswego County, where he remained a year, and the next year was appointed to an adjoining charge, namely, Sandy Creek, where he remained two years. At the close of his labors on the latter charge, in 1870, he was, in 1871, appointed to Oswego Falls, where, remaining two years, he closed his active life and labors.

Brother Dunning was at this period some seventy years of age, although his appearance would not indicate such an age, but for several years past his health had been perceptibly declining, so that at the first session of the Northern New York Conference, he was under the painful necessity of

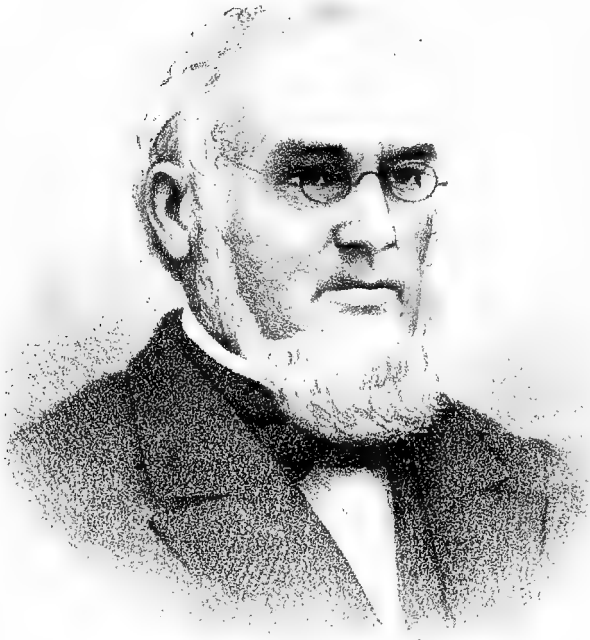
asking for a superannuated relation, which though willingly, was as painfully granted by his brethren of the conference. It is proper in this connection to remark that on the formation of the Central New York Conference, in 1868, by the dismemberment of the Black River Conference, and the annexation of an important portion of its territory to the former conference, Brother Dunning, by virtue of his location at the time of such dismemberment, fell within the bounds of the Central Conference, so that for four years, or until the restoration or re-adjustment of the conference boundaries by the general conference of 1872, he was a member of the Central New York Conference; but on the organization of the Northern New York Conference, he fell within the bounds of its territory. This temporary separation from his old brethren of the conference was a source of great grief to Brother Dunning. Not that he loved his new associates less, nor the preachers or people within the bounds of the conference to which he was of necessity attached, but he loved so ardently his old brethren, that on his frequent visits to our annual sessions, it could be plainly seen that the separation was to him a painful one, and he rejoiced greatly, when as a member he could attend the annual session, and feel perfectly at home with his former brethren as being one of them.

At the time of his superannuation, he resided in Fulton, the scene of so many of his former labors and triumphs, but he after removed to Weedsport, his favorite place of residence, where he continued to labor as best he could, while gradually sinking physically and mentally, until the time of his decease at Weedsport, on the 6th day of April, 1877. His last sickness was short but painful. The last week of his life was marked by a total prostration of his mental energies, arising no doubt from a derangement of the functions of the brain, with which he had for some time been affected; and it may not be improper here to remark that one cause at least of such derangement arose from business

embarrassments, for which he himself was not fully responsible. But these, with enfeebled health and a dependent family, seemed to weigh him down so heavily, that at length the strong powers of his nature yielded to these multiplied evils, and gave way at the approach of disease and death. What added to the solemnity of his last moments, especially to his now disconsolate widow, if not to himself, was the death of their last remaining son, about a week before that of the father. They had but two children, both boys. Charlie, their elder son, died in the army at Key West, of yellow fever, July 23d, 1864, aged 23 years, and their younger son, Willie, died in the city of New York, one week previous to his father's decease, thus leaving, of that once happy and united family, the stricken mother and wife, in her old age and bodily infirmities, to bear the blasts of this wintry world alone. Yet, not alone—while we listen to the tender voice of the Saviour, saying: "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

In his Memoir, written for the conference minutes, Rev. Gardner Baker thus speaks of Brother Dunning :

"Brother Dunning possessed a good degree of native talent, though he made no pretension to scholastic attainments. His strong common sense in a good measure supplied the place of early literary culture. But what gave him his great influence among the people, and secured success for him in every field of labor, was his strong faith in God and in the sufficiency of gospel truth, unadorned by human art, to save men. The evident sincerity and great earnestness with which he delivered his messages never failed to awaken the attention nor secure the confidence of his hearers. When not under the present baptism of the spirit, he was subject to a species of stammering, often more annoying to himself than his hearers. But when the divine afflatus rested upon him, his countenance glowed with fervor and his tongue became as the pen of a ready writer. He was a good and successful minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. The theme that inspired him the most was a full and free salvation from all sin, through the divine atonement. His sermons



REV. G. BAKER.

partook largely of the hortatory, and eternity alone can reveal the extent to which the church was quickened and sinners saved by his faithful ministry."

The length of time, Brother Dunning was in the ministry, and his abundant success in all his fields of labor, would seem to demand a more lengthy tribute to his honored memory than we have been able to give him, and yet we remember with satisfaction the declaration of the apostle, who, when appealing to those whom he had been instrumental in saving, says of them, and to them: "Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men;" and assuredly there is no doubt that there are hundreds of souls that have passed on to the better land, and hundreds of others still pressing forward, who in the day of eternity will be able to ascribe their salvation, under Jesus, to the labors and prayers of Brother Charles L. Dunning. We can offer no more sincere prayer than that his mantle may fall on others of his brethren in the ministry.

CHAPTER LVI.

REV. GARDNER BAKER.

THIS patriarch in the ministry of Northern New York was born in the town of Minden, Montgomery County, N. Y., Sept. 11th, 1802. His father, Thomas Baker, was a farmer, who died at the age of forty-five, when Gardner was in his ninth year. There were nine children in the family, six brothers and three sisters, at the time of the father's death, most of whom have passed away. Nothing occurred during the boyhood of Gardner but what was common to boys of his age. He worked on the farm in summer and attended school in the winter. His mother subsequently married again, and his step-father purchased a farm in Tren-

ton, Oneida County, to which the family was removed. Here Gardner resided with his parents for several years, attending school in winter, and laboring on the farm in the summer season.

In the autumn of 1820, when just past his eighteenth year, he became the subject of a mental, moral, and spiritual change, which gave tone and direction to his entire future life. During the summer, he was by turns the subject of deep thought in regard to death, judgment and eternity. A sense of his responsibility to God would at times overwhelm him so that he became unconscious of passing events, and would frequently find himself standing or sitting as one amazed. He had never been a steady church goer. His mother was a member of the Freewill Baptist Church, but the place of meeting was several miles distant from the family residence, so that the children seldom went to church. There was Methodist preaching once in two weeks about a mile and a-half distant, on a portion of what was then called Herkimer Circuit, embracing at that time the whole of Herkimer and a portion of Oneida Counties. Goodwin Stoddard and Dana Fox were the circuit preachers that year. In the autumn of the same year a young local preacher from Jefferson County, Joseph Williams by name, went into that neighborhood. He was eccentric, but deeply pious. Young Gardner frequently attended Methodist meetings at this time. At the close of a sermon one Sunday the preacher, Brother Williams, invited all who felt they needed religion to stay in class. Young Baker retired with the congregation, but remained in the vestibule. The door was left partly open so that he could hear what was said in the church. He stood alone and listened, and he remarks in his written memorandum that he would have given all the world, had it been his to give, to enjoy what those people said they enjoyed. He remained in the vestibule until the close of the class-meeting. The preacher on going out took him by the hand and affectionately talked to him about the Saviour who died for him.

Before parting, he promised the preacher to pray for himself, while the preacher promised to pray for the young man. The latter kept his promise, and soon became so distressed on account of his sins, and so earnest in pleading for mercy, as to be almost wholly unfitted for anything else. He spent most of his time in reading the Bible and praying. He had a place in the barn where many times during each day he went to confess his sins and plead for pardon. One day, after spending some time in the barn, he returned to the house almost in a state of despair. Instead of growing better he seemed to be growing worse, and his case more hopeless every hour. He opened the Bible, and his eyes fell upon these words of Paul: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit," &c. He closed the book and gave himself up to meditation. The plan of salvation seemed gradually to open before him. He saw the goodness of God in the provision he had made for man's redemption, and felt that all his sins were laid on Jesus Christ, his Saviour and his God.

This was the first conversion in the neighborhood for a long time, but was the beginning of a gracious revival that continued during the fall and ensuing winter. Young Baker now gave himself to study, and the following two summers he attended a select school in Trenton, and taught during the winter. In the spring of 1823, he entered the Lowville Academy, having a short time previously been licensed to exhort.

In August of that year, Rev. Daniel Barnes, presiding elder of Black River District, went to Lowville to hold a quarterly meeting. The Black River District then embraced nearly all the territory formerly included in the late Black River Conference. A number of charges in the northern part of the district had been left at the previous conference to be supplied. Brother Barnes earnestly urged Brother Baker to

supply one of those vacant charges. The latter, although he felt it his duty to devote himself to the work of the ministry, also felt that he needed further preparation by study, besides being young in years and in experience, and had held a license to exhort but a few months, and had enjoyed but few opportunities to exercise his gifts in public speaking, and was making satisfactory progress in his academic studies, so that he felt himself obliged to return a negative answer to the request of the presiding elder. A few days afterward he was invited by Sister Moore, of Lowville, a mother in Israel, to take tea at her house with the presiding elder. At the table, after the latter had given an account of the difficulty in obtaining supplies for the work, Sister Moore remarked, "Here is Brother Baker; send him." Brother Barnes replied: "Brother Baker will not go." This remark awakened in the young man's mind a new train of reflection that led him to enquire whether his objections were valid, or whether they did not arise more or less from selfishness, and whether he might not be setting up his own will in opposition to the call of God. At the close of this interview, Brother Baker engaged to meet the presiding elder at a camp-meeting, soon to be held in St. Lawrence County, and meantime to supply a vacant circuit, intending then to return to school. But Brother Barnes never got a supply, and Brother Baker never returned to school. After the presiding elder had left Lowville, Brother Baker began to look the difficulties of his position in the face. To travel a circuit in those days without a horse was not to be thought of. He was also without funds. His eldest brother, William, who was his guardian, and had control of a few hundred dollars left him by his father, resided in Springfield, Otsego County. He was satisfied his brother, who was now a lawyer, would not look with favor upon his intended undertaking; but he had to take a journey of about a hundred miles to see his brother, whom he found alone in his law office. After informing his brother of his intention to leave school and travel a cir-

cuit, the latter exclaimed with amazement: "What; are you going a circuit riding?" Brother Baker replied that he was. He rose from his chair and began walking the office floor back and forth. Gardner said to his brother: "I suppose my intention does not meet your approbation?" "No," he replied, "it does not. If you want to be a Methodist, I have no objections to make. If you want to be a Methodist minister, I do not object to that; but I do object to your going now," and then commenced giving the young man a lecture which he never forgot as long as he lived. The elder brother spoke kindly of the youth and inexperience of the younger brother, the greatness of the work, and the difficulties he would meet with. He said the Christian faith had many opposers, and among them men of great learning and talent, &c. William was not a religious man, but believed in Christianity. Had he been a Christian, he could hardly have spoken with more impressiveness on those subjects; so, at least, it seemed to the younger brother. As a result of the conversation, the latter became greatly troubled. He loved and revered his brother. From the time of the death of his father, he had been accustomed to look up to him for counsel and direction. His mind was now filled with doubts whether he had taken a hasty step, but he had pledged his word to meet his presiding elder, and there was no going back of his promise. At length the brother consented and furnished the means for his equipment, consisting of horse, saddle, bridle, saddle-bags, two small valises and a whip. Thus equipped, he turned his face toward the North Pole, and started to find his first circuit.

In this connection, allow us to give the exact words of Brother Baker in his riper years: "I may as well say that the doubts which overwhelmed me in my brother's law office, have never wholly forsaken me. From that day it has been a question with me whether I should not have been more useful in the church and done more good in the world if I had continued a few years longer in school. And

yet, these doubts have never made me unhappy. I was sincere in the course I adopted. For years my labors, feeble as they were, were greatly blessed. How many of the souls who were brought to Christ by my instrumentality might have been lost had I continued longer in school, is not for me to know. Nor can it be known to what extent my usefulness would have been advanced by a more thorough scholastic training before entering the work. During a somewhat protracted public life and observation, I have never ceased to feel the want of those scholarly attainments and those habits of patient and systematic study which I would have acquired by continuing longer in school."

The above thoughts are commended by the author to the attention of young men entering the ministry of any Christian denomination, whether local or itinerant. But to return to the narrative :

His first circuit was Indian River, extending from Carthage to within six miles of Ogdensburg, Rev. Wm. Jones being his colleague. There were about thirty regular appointments on the charge. To meet those appointments, each preacher had to travel nearly three hundred miles every four weeks. There was not a Methodist church edifice on the circuit, and very few belonging to other denominations. The people generally were poor, and the roads so bad as to be scarcely passable in the spring and fall, even on horseback. His home was in the saddle, and his inn wherever night overtook him. As to pecuniary compensation, including gifts of every kind, all that he and his colleague received during the year was sixty dollars each. Nearly all of this was in cheap articles of different kinds—clothing, orders on the stores, &c. He says, "I doubt if I saw twenty dollars in money, either in my own hands or elsewhere, during the whole year; and yet I cannot remember that I at any time thought my circuit was large or my lot hard. I was young, my health was good, and I became so used to the saddle I could ride all day

without weariness. I felt it an honor and privilege to be employed in any way to advance the cause of my Master. And then the pains the people took to hear preaching, and the eagerness with which they listened to it, went far to compensate the preacher for the few sacrifices he had to make. Since that time I have occupied what I have called good appointments and pleasant fields of labor, but have never been happier anywhere than when preaching the gospel to the poor in their log school houses and enjoying the hearty Christian hospitality of their cabins."

The preceding General Conference had ordered the organization of district annual conferences on all the districts. Each district conference embraced as members, all the local preachers within the bounds of the district. On this conference devolved the responsible duty of giving and renewing licenses, and recommending candidates to the annual conferences for admission on trial and for deacon's and elder's orders. When Brother Baker went to his first circuit, he had license only to exhort. The district conference was not to meet till the next June. During this his first year, he was a "traveling exhorter," but the brethren on the charge persisted in calling him a preacher, and by the advice of his presiding elder, he, in order to meet the wishes and expectations of the people, preached as well and as much as though he had a formal license to do so. The district conference met in Rodman, in June, 1824, at which time he was given a regular license to preach, and was also recommended to the Genesee Annual Conference for admission on trial, and was so admitted, and by the bishop was sent to St. Lawrence Circuit. It embraced five townships, lying along the St. Lawrence river, viz: Oswegatchie, Lisbon, Madrid, Louisville and Massena, covering a territory of between four and five hundred square miles, the two extremes being some forty miles apart. It was a two weeks' circuit, and had twelve appointments. Soon after he went to the circuit, he was visited by Bishop George, then

on his return from the Canada Conference, who spent the Sabbath with him at Ogdensburg. The bishop saw they greatly needed a church edifice in that place, and advised Brother Baker at once to start a subscription for the purpose. Said the Bishop: "Go into every house, and store, and office, and shop, and ask the people to give you something to help build a Methodist meeting house. If they say, no! You say, yes! and they will give you something." Brother Baker endeavored to carry out these instructions, and having obtained a suitable site through the kindness and liberality of George Parish, Esq., afterward Baron Parish, of Germany, who was at that time a large landholder in the county, the result of Brother Baker's efforts was that a plain and unpretentious building was erected in the course of a few months, and solemnly dedicated to the worship of the Triune God, this being the first church edifice on the circuit.

Brother Baker remained on the circuit two years, and during that time many new classes and societies were formed, and the cause of Methodism generally, strengthened. This was especially true of Ogdensburg. When he first visited that village, he found about a dozen names on the class-book. They were pious, but mostly poor people, worshiping in a small building, in a bye place that had once been a school house, but was now old and dilapidated. When he left the charge, the number in society had largely increased, had a comfortable church, and felt able to support a preacher without aid from other parts of the circuit. At the next conference, they were constituted a station, and Rev. W. W. Rundell was sent to them from conference.

At the conference held in Palmyra, in 1826, Brother Baker was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop McKendree. He next received his appointment to LeRay and Watertown, Nathaniel Salisbury being the preacher in charge. Brother Salisbury was then in his prime, tall and erect, full of faith and power. Between him

and his young colleague the utmost harmony prevailed, and a friendship formed between them that terminated only with life, if we may suppose that true friendship terminates even then. Besides being colleagues together, these two ministers had been twice presiding elders to each other. In January, 1827, Brother Baker was united in marriage with her who now remains his widow—Miss Esther Scott of Brownville, Jefferson County, New York. The marriage proved more than ordinarily a happy one, the lady being well adapted for the duties of the responsible relation assumed—as an evidence of which, we shall, toward the close of this article, call the readers' attention to the account given of the celebration of their golden wedding, fifty years afterward.

At the next conference, Brother Salisbury was appointed presiding elder of the district, and Brother Baker became preacher in charge of the circuit, with Brother L. Edgerton as his junior colleague, who labored half of the year, and then retired from the work, leaving Brother Baker alone to perform the work of two men; to do which he was obliged to preach three sermons every other Sunday, and four every alternate Sunday, with frequent week-day preaching. At the conference held in Utica, in 1828, Brother Baker was ordained elder by Bishop Roberts, and was appointed to New York Mills station, where he remained two years. During the first year he, with his people, were blessed with the most powerful revival of religion that had ever been known in that region of country. To quote Brother Baker's own language again :

“There was one day, particularly, on which the spirit of God was shed forth in such measure and with such power that it seemed as though all hearts must yield to its influence. It was a week-day. I cannot, from memory, fix upon the exact day of the week. The Sunday previous had been a day of great heart-searching, and several conversions had taken place in the evening. On the day referred to, after dinner, all hands went to their work in the large

cotton factory. The superintendent was a professed infidel and scoffer at religion. On going through the building, he found that in different rooms, the hands were neglecting their work. They were gathered together in groups behind their looms or spinning jennies, weeping and praying. Two or three or more, who were awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger, would gather around some professor of religion, who would be talking to them or praying for them. The superintendent sent a messenger to the office to notify Mr. Wolcott, the proprietor, that the hands were neglecting their work, and were insubordinate. Mr. Wolcott, ignorant of the real state of the case, returned a sharp and threatening reproof. This had the effect to break up for the time all the little prayer-meetings, and sent all hands to their work. It was not long, however, before the same things were repeated. The superintendent sent another messenger, saying that the hands were not only idle, but some of them were almost mutinous, &c. Mr. Wolcott was a Christian gentleman, a member of the Presbyterian Church, and highly esteemed by all who knew him. This was an extraordinary case; such an one as had never happened in that factory before. He made up his mind to go and see for himself. The result was he sent for Brother Giles, who resided at the Burnside factory, a third of a mile away, and took us into a large unoccupied room in the factory, and told us he was going to order the factory stopped for the rest of the day, and we might occupy that room with the hands as we chose. The hum of machinery was hushed. Notice flew from room to room that a prayer-meeting would be commenced immediately in the unoccupied room. Any attempt of mine to describe what followed would be a failure. The room was very large. It had a good floor, but was entirely empty. We formed a circle by joining hands, after the manner of camp-meeting praying circles of fifty years ago. Mourners were invited to come within the circle. If 'there is joy in heaven, in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth,' what rapture must have swelled the bosoms of the heavenly hosts on beholding what now appeared! I shall not attempt a description of the scene. Our trustees had lent the use of the Methodist meeting house to our Presbyterian brethren for that day and evening. They were about organizing a church. Several clergymen of that denomination were present from abroad. As evening ap-

proached, therefore, we adjourned to meet in the large dining hall of a boarding-house, kept by 'Father Penny,' of precious memory. How many were converted during that day and evening, I am not able to say. They were many. The work was not confined to the New York Mills. The "Burnside," a factory belonging to the same proprietors, about a third of a mile up the river or creek, felt the shock about the same time of day. That factory was not stopped, but several conversions took place while the hands were about their work. Among them was one of the overseers. The infidel superintendent at the New York Mills was not converted that day, but he was awakened and converted soon afterwards."

At the conference of 1830, held in Utica, Brother Baker was appointed to Auburn station, where he remained two years. Those were successful years, about one hundred being added to the church during the first year, and nearly as many the second year. The chaplaincy of the state prison was in those days divided between the three prominent denominations of the village—Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist. The preaching in the prison was at nine, A. M., each denomination taking its turn once in three weeks. The people of those days were very exacting as to the amount of preaching required of their preachers. Most of the time during those two years, Brother Baker preached three times on the Sabbath to the same congregation, and on prison days he preached four times. During the first year, the society built a parsonage, into which he moved his family the beginning of the second year. At the close of the second year, the foundation of a new church edifice was laid, Bishop Hedding laying the corner stone. Brother Baker was quite active in raising the subscription, and in making preliminary arrangements for the erection of the new building. At the close of the year, the leading brethren of the church thought Brother Baker's presence near them indispensable to the completion of the church; but by the provisions of discipline, he could not be returned to the same charge for a third year. The brethren therefore pre-

vailed on Bishop Hedding to erect a new charge out of a society in the vicinity, which Brother Baker had raised up, on Fleming Hill, who made it into a station, and appointed Brother Baker to the charge of the same, with the understanding he should remain with his family in Auburn, and help the brethren through with the enterprise. The next spring, the building was finished and dedicated, and by an arrangement of the presiding elder, Doctor Dempster, Doctor George Peck was removed from Cazenovia to Auburn, Brother Baker to Cazenovia, and Brother John E. Cole, a local preacher who had been employed in Auburn, was removed to Fleming. At the next conference, held in Cazenovia, Brother Baker was appointed presiding elder of a new district just formed out of a portion of Cayuga and Black River districts. This new field of labor, or rather office, to which he was now called, involved many new duties and responsibilities, but he went to his work with a single purpose—to glorify God in the faithful discharge of every duty—and his brethren who were co-laborers with him, know full well how ardently he labored to effect that purpose.

In 1836, the Black River Conference was formed, and Brother Baker was appointed to succeed Doctor Dempster as presiding elder of Black River District, in the newly formed conference. On this district he remained four years. In 1840, he was stationed in Syracuse, as preacher in charge, remaining the full term of two years. In 1842, he was sent to Fulton, where he also remained two years, with the exception of a portion of the latter year, when he was appointed presiding elder of Oswego District, to succeed Brother Gary on the district, the latter having been appointed on a special mission to Oregon by Bishop Hedding. He remained on Oswego District four years, nearly. In 1847, he was stationed in Mexico, remaining two years, and in 1849, was appointed presiding elder of Watertown District. There he presided four years, and in 1853, was

appointed to Adams District, remaining four years ; in 1857, to Rome District. In 1861, he was again appointed to Watertown District ; in 1865, to Adams District again. In 1869, at the conference in Watertown, feeling the need of rest, he asked for a superannuated relation, which the conference freely granted him. His year of "rest" was not a long one, however. About four months after conference, Rev. E. C. Bruce, who was stationed in Carthage, was elected by the trustees of Gouverneur Wesleyan Seminary as principal. Having accepted the appointment, Brother Baker was asked to supply his place at Carthage. He accepted the appointment from the presiding elder, and went there, not expecting to remain longer than the next session of conference. But the people were anxious for his return, asserting their willingness to accept the amount of service he might feel able to render. Accordingly, the conference, at his own request, at its next session, restored his name to the effective list, and he was appointed to Carthage ; so that his name appears among the effective preachers in 1870. During the year, his physical infirmities seemed to increase, and at length he was constrained to return to the superannuated ranks, having spent nearly half a century entirely devoted to his Master's service.

Toward the close of his active service, he was prompted to make some animadversions upon his former mode of life, designed, no doubt, for the benefit of his younger brethren in the ministry, for all of whom he had the most tender regard. Writing under date of March 16th, 1871, he makes the following memoranda :

"The year is drawing to its close. I am now in the 69th year of my age. Some men at my period of life would seem yet in their prime. But it is my misfortune, perhaps to some extent my fault, to be the subject of bodily infirmities, which at times disqualify me for effective labor. I inherited from my parents a fine physical constitution. For several years during the early part of my ministry, I scarcely lost a day by sickness. The first shock given to my uni-

formly good health occurred while I was stationed at Auburn. It was caused by over-working and over-eating; more the latter than the former. The Sunday work of that station was hard the year round. About half the year we had revival meetings nearly every week-day evening. These meetings, when the state of things was especially interesting, were sometimes held till a late hour. Ignorant of the consequences that must follow, I formed a habit of eating a second supper after my evening work was done. My good wife would have a warm cup of tea ready, and generally some warm griddle cakes, of which I was very fond, and of these, with plenty of butter and sugar and cheese to give them a relish, I would make a hearty meal. I did not know what a wrong I was inflicting on myself. I mistook the call of appetite and habit for the call of nature. I did not realize then that the organs of digestion needed rest as well as the other organs and members of the body; that by filling the stomach with food on retiring to bed, I made it necessary for the organs of digestion to summon the already exhausted vital forces of the system to aid in performing the task which had been so unnaturally and so cruelly imposed. No wonder that my nights were feverish and my sleep often disturbed by unpleasant dreams. That I would rise in the morning with headache and 'a load on my stomach, and out of sorts generally.' Instead of attributing these effects to the true cause, I thought they resulted from hard work and late hours. At length these abuses culminated in a severe attack of dyspepsia with its attending evils. I was now compelled to learn a lesson which, had I learned before, would have saved me from much suffering. I make this record, that if ever it should come under the eye of my younger brethren in the ministry, they may be induced to avoid the error into which I fell.

"There is no class of professional men who stand in greater need of a thorough knowledge of the laws of health than the minister of the gospel. I now put myself on a rigid course of dietetic discipline, and have thus been able to keep about my work. I have not through life been ranked with dyspeptics, but I have been obliged to adhere strictly to certain rules of hygiene, in order to prevent it. The before mentioned attack superinduced certain other ailments and infirmities from which I have never recovered and from which I never shall recover till mortality is ex-

exchanged for immortality. As years increase and the vital forces decline, I find less power in the system to resist the encroachments of disease. I am yet able to do considerable work. If left to my own choice, when to labor and when to rest, I could perform an amount of labor that would generally be satisfactory to the people. But calls for labor in the pastoral office are often imperative. Sabbaths and sick rooms, and death-beds, and funerals make their demands without reference to the pastors ability to obey them. I feel that with me the period of effective service in the ranks of the ministry is passed. I shall ask my brethren at the approaching conference, to replace my name on the list of superannuates. It is not my intention, however, to collapse into a state of idleness; I shall find enough to do.

‘If you want a field of labor,
You can find it any where.’”

Brother Baker was now completing the 48th year of his ministry, all of which he spent in the active work—excepting four months in 1869, he had been constantly engaged in the regular itinerant duties of his high and holy office. His time was thus occupied 5 years on circuits, 12 years on stations, and 31 years on districts. He had belonged to three annual conferences, the Genessee, the Oneida, the Black River, and subsequently the Northern New York, but he was never “transferred” from one conference to another, except by the readjustment of conference boundaries, and never but once failed to answer to his name at the opening of the conference session, and the first roll call, and that one exception was by failure of the cars to connect, by which he was detained about an hour. He had the honor of having been elected delegate to six General Conferences, namely, those of Baltimore, in 1840; New York, 1844; Boston, 1852; Indianapolis, 1856; Buffalo, 1860; Philadelphia, 1864. It will be noticed that Brother Baker was not a delegate to the General Conference of 1848, and he expressed his fears that his brethren did not approve of his action, and that of his fellow delegates, in the memorable conference of 1844, in consenting

to the plan of separation between the church north and the church south. If any such feeling existed among the ministers of the Black River Conference, it must have been quickly dispelled, for the author as an active member of the conference, at the conference electing delegates, never heard of any such disapproval. Perhaps there were latent existing reasons why an entire new delegation was elected, but we think it scarcely possible that the brethren even had it in their heart to find fault with Brother Baker, for any action taken by him at the General Conference of 1844, nor did they doubt his fidelity to the church, nor his sound judgment, as exemplified in his votes and other official acts. We deem this much due to the memory of this godly and otherwise eminent man. The quadrennium, intervening the General Conferences of 1844 and 1848, was a season of great agitation and turmoil in the church as well as in the state, and if mistakes were made by honest, kind hearted brethren, they were but mistakes arising perhaps from mistaken views, but from the purest motives, while on both sides, especially in these northern conferences, the preachers were true to the claims of oppressed humanity, and especially to those of the down-trodden slave.

Rev. George Gary, at the time of his lamented death, was a member of the General Missionary Committee, and Brother Baker was appointed by Bishop Janes to fill the vacancy. At the next General Conference of 1860, he was also elected a member of the New York Book Committee. He was also selected by the same conference as a visitor or representative to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada in 1862. Dr. Peter Cartwright was one of his associates. He greatly enjoyed his visit, and remembered with love and gratitude the kindness of his Christian brethren.

At the conference of 1871, Brother Baker's name was placed on the superannuated list of the Black River Conference, on which list it remained until the close of life. But

though retired, he was not inactive. He had many calls to perform ministerial duties, to all of which he yielded a ready assent, as far as health would allow. He did not enter into any business transactions or relations during his retirement. Indeed, he never was given to business speculations, and with the exception of a few purchases of real estate, made for the benefit of his family, he was emphatically a man of "one work." Having a small but neat residence in Watertown, where he had spent many happy years, he continued to reside in this pleasant city, exchanging from day to day the civilities of life with his friends and admirers, of whom he had a large number, and in the summer season visiting the famous Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence, and especially the "Thousand Island Park," where he spent many happy weeks. At the conference of 1876, held in Potsdam, he was elected as a delegate for the seventh time to the ensuing General Conference, where he was received and treated by bishops, ministers and the laity with distinguished respect and honor, being the oldest delegate on the floor of conference.

On the 10th day of January, 1877, the anniversary of his 50th wedding day occurred, and probably we cannot do our readers a greater favor than to insert the following, taken from the *Watertown Times*, a respectable daily paper published in that city, and although embracing some historical items already given, we prefer to give it in its entirety :

GOLDEN WEDDING.

Reverend and Mrs. Gardner Baker Celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Their Marriage — Distinguished Guests Present—Congratulatory Letters—Beautiful Decorations—Bountiful Repast—Gifts and Tokens—Address by Bishop Peck — A, Very Pleasant Gathering.

"The fiftieth anniversary of the marriage of Rev. and Mrs. Gardner Baker was celebrated at their residence, 130 Coffeen street, yesterday afternoon and evening. There were present

a large number of guests, the spacious house being comfortably filled in spite of the storm, which detained so many who had expected to be present. Among the members of the family we noticed Prof. J. Dorman Steele and wife, a son-in-law and daughter, of Elmira; G. H. Tallett and wife, a son-in-law and daughter, of this city; a daughter-in-law, Mrs. Sarah E. Baker, of Rome; and several grand-children, William H. Tallett, William G. Baker, Fanny Baker and Helen B. Tallett, and a niece, Mrs. Talcott, of Boonville. Among the clergymen were Bishop Jesse T. Peck, Syracuse; Revs. T. B. Shepherd, Carthage, W. R. Cobb, Utica, C. H. Guile, Antwerp, D. D. Parker, Pamela, E. S. Cheesman, Clayton; and Revs. I. S. Bingham, M. G. Bullock, R. N. Barber, J. N. Dayan, M. D. Kinney and G. M. Mead, of this city.

"Among the citizens of Watertown present were Hon. B. Brockway, of the Watertown *Daily Times*, G. W. Wiggins, Joseph Atwell, J. F. Moffett and many others.

"Upon a table were lying a large number of letters from friends who were unable to be present, but who joined in the congratulations of the auspicious occasion. We noticed particularly communications from Bishops Scott and Simpson; Rev. E. O. Haven, LL. D., Chancellor of Syracuse University; Rev. H. Bannister, D. D., of Evanston Biblical Institute; Rev. Luke L. Hitchcock, agent of the Methodist Book Concern, of Cincinnati, Rev. O. H. Warren, editor of the *N. C. Advocate*; Prof. J. R. French, LL. D., of Syracuse University; Rev. J. B. Foote, of Syracuse; Rev. B. S. Wright, of Rome; Rev. Ross C. Houghton, of St. Louis; Rev. W. X. Ninde, of Detroit; and many others whose names we cannot give, but whose kind greetings were full of tender memories and affectionate remembrances.

"The house was beautifully decorated for the occasion, especially the parlor in which the reverend couple received their numerous friends. Running around the room, next to the ceiling, was a portion of the marriage service, in large gilt letters. 'For better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish, till death us do part'—the last clause being brought around in a semi-circle over the portraits of the bride and groom. At the head of the same were the dates 1827 and 1877, enclosing a sheaf of golden wheat heads and ornamented with frosted fern leaves. A window was fitted up in memory of a lately

deceased daughter, Mrs. Mary B. Dean, of Dubuque, Iowa. Her name appeared in silver letters on the cornice, while on the lace curtains was her picture, surrounded by ferns and autumn leaves, and an illustrated text, 'He giveth his beloved sleep.' The side walls were decorated with suitable mottoes, in large gilt letters, such as: 'Shall auld acquaintance be forgot,' &c.; 'Together let us sweetly live,' &c. The room was brilliantly lighted by rows of wax candles in small gilt candle-sticks placed on the cornices and producing a unique effect. The whole house was prettily trimmed with evergreens and interspersed ripe wheat-heads, while appropriate mottoes and exquisite bouquets caught the eye at every turn. The conservatory especially was gay with luxuriant plants, fragrant flowers, trailing vines and Chinese lanterns, in the midst of which warbled a sweet-voiced canary.

"Many golden tokens of love and regard were showered upon the happy couple. Some of these were arranged on a table in a side-room. The most conspicuous were a group of ten gold eagles, the gift of Prof. and Mrs. Steele; a handsome gold-headed cane, from a grandson, Charles B. Dean, of Dubuque; an elegant gold-lined nut dish, from friends in Dubuque; a halved walnut shell, containing a half-eagle and labeled 'a nut to crack,' from Rev. A. S. Smalley, of Malone; a gold pen, from Rev. J. W. Armstrong, of Fredonia; a bouquet of everlasting flowers, gathered on Rev. Mr. Baker's birth-place, in Minden, Montgomery County; a set of gold-lined spoons, napkin-rings, a double-eagle, from Mr. Wiggins, of this city, and many other gifts of coin, bank bills, pictures, &c.—precious evidences of kindly remembrances.

"Among so many remembrances, the visitors were not forgotten. An elegant entertainment had been provided by Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Tallett, the son-in-law and daughter with whom the venerable couple reside. We can testify from personal participation in the hearty good-cheer of the supper-room, that this was by the guests, one of the best appreciated of all the marriage gifts.

"Rev. Mr. Baker came into this section of the state fifty-four years ago. He was then appointed to preach on what was known as the Indian River Circuit. This extended from Denmark, in Lewis County, to within six miles of Ogdensburg. It embraced the whole or parts of the towns of Denmark, Champion, Wilna, Antwerp, Alexandria, Hammond, Rossie and Morristown. To get around this circuit once a

month required 300 miles travel. There was not at that time a Methodist church edifice in this entire territory. The 'circuit rider' preached every day in log school houses, slab shanties, or barns, wherever an audience could be gathered. Much of this country was then new and the people few. Now, it is covered with thriving villages and beautiful churches, with comfortable parsonages, whose occupants little think of the sacrifices and suffering of those who in hardships and toil sowed the seed whose abundant harvest they are reaping.

"During the half century and over of Father Baker's public life, he has enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his brethren, both in the ministry and the laity, to a remarkable degree. He has held the office of presiding elder for thirty-one years. Twice, on account of the absence of the bishop, he has been appointed president of the Black River Conference—once presiding during the entire session. During a quadrennium, (1860-64), he served as a member of the New York Book Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church. By the General Conference of 1860, he was appointed fraternal delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. At the late General Conference at Baltimore, he was the oldest delegate present, and was the recipient of many marked attentions, being honored with a seat upon the platform with the bishops, during the entire session.

"Mrs. Baker was the daughter of Captain Enos Scott, of Perch River, New York, who died the past year, having attained the ripe age of nearly 101 years. She has endured the hardships and toils of an itinerant's life with Christian zeal and patience, and is justly beloved by a wide circle of friends.

"We cannot better close this brief sketch than by a quotation from a letter of Doctor Armstrong's, a clergyman so well remembered in this region, which we are kindly permitted to copy :

"FREDONIA, January 8th, 1877.

My Very Dear and Highly Esteemed Friends :

Your golden wedding is a pleasant stimulus to the recollection of the old scenes and associations. It illuminates the past with a fresh and golden light, and re-animates it with its old chivalric spirit.

As I look down the glowing years, I see again the old exhibition of zeal for the glory of God in the salvation of men ; I see again the privations, the self-denial and the labors of the faithful of those by-gone years ; my cheeks tingle with shame again as I witness the insults and

mortifications which they had to endure, and my heart leaps again as I hear the shouts of victory go up from so many well fought fields. The vision hallows afresh the memory and the ministry of the last semi-centennial of our church in Northern New York. It is purifying, chastening and encouraging. What blows were given for truth and right with the weapons which are mighty through God! What mountains were removed! What strongholds were taken by these invincible warriors! What heroes they were, what mighty men of valor! The shouts of victory, the hallelujahs arise all along the line of the half century!

As the vision passes, amongst the foremost of the 'laurel-crowned heroes' may be recognized my dear friend and brother, Gardner Baker. How true and firm his step! How unconquerable his faith in God! How tender and loving his heart! How safe his leadership!

Allow me to congratulate you, my brother, on the advent of this day. I shake you by the hand. I thank God for bringing you safely to it. I wish you his richest blessings.

"The great event of the reception was the speech of Bishop Jesse T. Peck, who honored the occasion by his presence, and by his genial presence and warm sympathy added to the enjoyment of all. We are, fortunately, able to give the bishop's most appropriate and excellent remarks nearly in full:

" 'Respected sister and brother: We have assembled to congratulate you upon the fiftieth anniversary of your wedding. You are surrounded by friends, who share your joy. The years have been long, but laden with blessings. Your memories are now quick with the facts of young manhood and womanhood. You remember the joys and hopes of that memorable day, the precious friends, young and old, who stood around you—delightful memories they are. No prophet then unrolled the future. No one could say for how long that joy would be. You did not dare to think it would be fifty years. You wished it might; but of the trials and delights, the sorrows and joys, the labor and rewards, you could say nothing. The future was veiled, only there was rich promise of happiness in connubial life, and you did well that you did not doubt. Now you *know* what then you could only conjecture. Now you realize what then you could only hope. The fifty years have come and gone! And such years! How sweet has been the growing life of holy love! How tender and strong has been the hand which has borne you through your cares and trials! How rich the grace which has 'kept your minds and hearts in the knowledge and love of God!' To what vocation of high and sacred trust have you been called! To what rank of honor, dignity and toil have you been raised! It is truly wonderful. These have been most eventful years. No

such other years in the history of this continent, at least. Steam, the electric telegraph, the grand march of liberty, the fall of slavery and the temporal power of Rome, the organizations for Christian missions, the spread of the Bible and the support of Christian education, the unparalleled growth of the church for which you have toiled. You have seen this all during your wonderful life of connubial happiness. And to-night you are not alone. Those who are flesh of your flesh, bone of your bone, are here, dear madam, as your bridesmaids. Then their noble husbands and the precious grandchildren, dear brother, stand by your side. The joy and beauty standing with you on the 10th of January, 1827, were nothing to these. What would you have said if you could have caught a glimpse of your attendants fifty years from then? They are here a part of yourselves, to share and swell your joy. And this grand company of living friends! With what thrills of joy do they hail this golden day! They love you. And they are not alone; they are only representatives of a great multitude; for surely, more devoted friends no man and woman ever had than you. Hundreds, many hundreds, who cannot be here, send their love and mingle in these glad congratulations. Many of them are your spiritual children; for you have been faithful and blessed in this grand itinerancy, and you have taught by a noble example our younger ministers (and their wives) to redeem their vows, 'not to mind our rules but to keep them.'

"I thank God that I am here to-night to acknowledge, though I can never pay, the debt I owe you for kindness in my young manhood, and in later years. With all my heart I thank you.

"Weddings are joyous, and they ought to be. Sometimes, however, they are sinfully trifling. This must not be so. Our hearts are filled with happiness, and not with mirth. Thoughts too solemn and grand, of a wonderful past and a glorious future, and responsibilities yet to be met, press upon us; God, the guide of those fifty years, is here. The honor and dignity of the holy ministry crowd this room, and the light of a life of soul-saving and of an eternity of joy where the pastor and the saved shall meet, is pressing upon us.

"But this must not be done in prose. The exercise itself is a grand poem. We pass to-night into a region of poetry.

In plain prose this would be nonsense. We leave behind for this once the realm of facts, where we must take things as we find them, and move in the creations of poetry, where we have things as we want them. So we are all poets to-night.

“ ‘No man who was not born a poet, and has no reputation to lose, can afford to extemporize verses. In my *first* childhood I made some verses, ‘When I became a man I put away childish things.’ I suppose it is about time for me to begin again. Listen :

Amid the throes of life and death,
We wait one pure, celestial breath,
One birth, of God, to perish never—
Hail, holy love! thou livest ever!

One blessed night in '27,
With light aflame direct from Heaven,
She kindled hearts with joy so strong,
A wedding day fifty years long!

To-night she breathes ‘married again ;’
We answer back the glad amen ;
They celebrate the holy bliss
With fond embrace and charming kiss.

A wedding, Gold—no tin, nor tears—
The gifts are gold—rich souvenirs—
Golden in love, husband and wife—
Golden in years—a long, long life!’ ”

“The gestures of the happy bride and groom corresponded with the utterances of these impromptu verses. Hearty congratulation followed. Then extracts from the most interesting letters were read by Rev. Mr. Kinney. Finally with songs, speeches from several of the guests, merry conversation, and a fervent closing prayer by Bishop Peck, this delightful golden wedding came to an end all too soon.”

In the ensuing summer, he repaired to the Thousand Island Park, his favorite summer resort for recreation and mental and religious enjoyment, resulting from the annual meetings held at that beautiful spot, and remained till September, when he suddenly exchanged Eden’s garden on

earth, for the brighter Eden above. But we will give the account as published in a city paper at Watertown :

FATHER BAKER CALLED HOME.

*Rev. Gardner Baker of this City Found Dead at the
Thousand Island Park, Sunday Morning.*

"We have not received a more painful announcement in a long time, than the one that reached us yesterday, stating that Father Baker was dead. Knowing that he had apparently been robust, and in excellent health during the past summer, we could scarcely realize that he had answered his Master's summons and had gone hence. The details of this melancholy event are as follows :

"He had been spending the summer at his cottage at the Thousand Island Park, surrounded by many very intimate friends. Sunday morning he arose about five o'clock as usual. Shortly afterward, he went to an adjoining out-house, and not returning, his family became anxious about him and went to search for him. They found him at the place mentioned, with his clothing upon him exactly as it was when he went out. His head was resting upon his hand. Life was entirely extinct. This sad event cast a gloom over the entire assemblage at the park. It was the first death that had ever occurred on the grounds.

"Rev. Mr. Baker came into this section of the state 54 years ago. He was then appointed to preach on what was known as the Indian River Circuit. This extended from Denmark, in Lewis County, to within six miles of Ogdensburg. It embraced the whole or parts of the towns of Denmark, Champion, Wilna, Antwerp, Alexandria, Hammond, Rossie and Morristown. To get around this circuit once a month required 300 miles travel. There was not at that time a Methodist church edifice in this entire territory. The 'circuit rider' preached every day in log school houses, slab shanties, or barns, or wherever an audience could be gathered. Much of this country was then new, and the people few. Now it is covered with thriving villages and beautiful churches, with comfortable parsonages, whose occupants little think of the sacrifices and sufferings of those who in hardships and toil sowed the seed whose abundant harvest they are reaping.

"During the half century and over of Father Baker's public life, he has enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his brethren, both in the ministry and laity, to a remarkable degree. He has held the office of presiding elder for 31 years. Twice, on account of the absence of the bishop, he has been appointed president of the Black River Conference; once presiding during the entire session. During a quadrennium, (1860—1864), he served as a member of the New York Book Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church. By the General Conference of 1860, he was appointed fraternal delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. At the late General Conference at Baltimore, he was the oldest delegate present, and was the recipient of many marked attentions, being honored with a seat upon the platform with the bishops during the entire session.

"Mrs. Baker was the daughter of Capt. Enos Scott, of Perch River, New York, who died the past year, having attained the ripe age of nearly 101 years. She has endured the hardships and toils of an itinerant's life with Christian zeal and patience, and is justly beloved by a wide circle of friends.

"Father Baker's remains arrived in this city at 11 o'clock to-day, and were conveyed to his late residence on Coffeen street. His funeral services will be held at the Arsenal street Methodist Episcopal Church on Wednesday, at eleven o'clock A. M. Rev. Chancellor E. O. Haven will deliver the memorial address.

"The ladies at the park, friends of the late Gardner Baker, sent this morning a beautiful tribute of their love and respect. The design is a cross of delicate ferns and green mosses, in which were placed sweetly fragrant waterlilies, just gathered from the placid waters of the river. His memory will live as green as the moss of that beautiful cross."

We will close this chapter by simply inserting the Memoir prepared for the succeeding conference after his death, written by his very intimate friend, Rev. I. S. Bingham, D. D. :

Rev. Gardner Baker.

"Gardner Baker was born in the town of Minden, Montgomery County, N. Y., Sept. 11th, 1802, and died Aug. 12th, 1877, wanting only thirty days of seventy-five years of life

on earth. His home had been for the last sixteen years in the city of Watertown, but his death occurred on Wells' Island, 'Thousand Island Park,' where, with a part of his family, he was spending a few weeks for recreation and health.

"At the age of 16 years, he removed from his birth-place with his mother, to Trenton, Oneida County, N. Y., where in 1820—then eighteen years of age—he was converted, and at once united with the M. E. Church. This, to him, was the great event of his life. The principles of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ took full possession of his heart and mind, and gave direction to all his thoughts. Being well assured that he was called to preach the gospel he had now so heartily embraced, he commenced a course of study preparatory to his life-work.

"In the autumn of 1823, Dan Barnes, presiding elder of Black River District—then Genesee Conference—found the young man in Lowville Academy, and urged him to go at once into the work of the ministry as an itinerant, and complete his studies among the practical realities of an itinerant life. Between an intense love of study and a most earnest desire to work for God and win souls, a sharp conflict now arose, which, however, was soon settled by leaving the academy, and going at once to his first appointment as junior preacher on Indian River Circuit, under appointment of the presiding elder. In the autumn of 1824—having 'traveled' nearly one year as an exhorter—he received his first license to preach from the district conference, and was appointed to St. Lawrence Circuit.

"We now find him fairly started in his life work, and he enters it with an earnest devotion, a completeness of consecration that carried him through a long life with undeviating constancy.

"From his first appointment on Indian River Circuit, in September, 1823, to his last on Carthage station, closing in May, 1871, a period of nearly 48 years, he was in continuous, effective, regular service in the conference, excepting only four months in the summer of 1869.

"Of these years, thirty-one were given to districts, seventeen to circuits and stations, and the last six to rest as a superannuate, after nearly half a century of unremitting toil.

"No member of the Black River Conference ever enjoyed

more fully the confidence of his brethren, or shared more largely in the trusts and honors they had to bestow than Brother Baker. He held the office of trustee of conference funds from the day the conference was chartered in 1841, until the day of his death without any interruption, and for much of the time was president of the board. He was several times elected the secretary of the conference. At the session of the Black River Conference in 1872, at Canton, N.Y., Bishop Scott having failed on account of severe illness to attend, Brother Baker was elected president of the conference, and he filled the office of a bishop with great acceptability. He also represented the missionary district on the general committee during one quadrennium, and also the district, then constituted of the Black River, Troy and Vermont Conferences, on the general book committee.

“He was seven times chosen delegate to the General Conference. He represented his brethren in the General Conference held at Baltimore in 1840, in New York 1844, in Boston 1852, in Indianapolis 1856, in Buffalo 1860, in Philadelphia 1864, and in Baltimore in 1876. At the last General Conference it was found that only two of its members were members of the General Conference of 1840. These were Gardner Baker and Aaron Wood, and by special resolution these honored brethren were invited to a seat on the platform during the session.

“As a preacher, Brother Baker delivered his thoughts in a style at once chaste and perspicuous, free of all ambiguous words or phrases, never dogmatical or controversial, essaying only to reach the hearts of his hearers by the shortest route, which he seldom failed to do. He used but one weapon in the pulpit, ‘the sword of the spirit.’ This he used skillfully, never wreathing it with flowers, but touching his hearers with its smooth but keenest edge, and however much he might have lamented his want of ‘scholarly attainments,’ his hearers seldom discovered the want. His devotion to the church to which he gave his long life was marked. He was always jealous of her honor and the purity of her membership, and a strong but conscientious conservator of her peculiar economy. He never seemed to forget his promise made fifty years ago, to ‘keep’ rather than to ‘mend the rules.’ An experience of thirty-one years in district work made him familiar with the polity of Methodism, and gave him intimate acquaintance with the mutual relations and dependences of

pastors and people. His counsels, when sought, as they often were, upon questions arising in church affairs or in the administration of the discipline, were given with such thoughtful prudence and wisdom as to command the confidence of all parties concerned and bring out the most happy results.

"Brother Baker's Christian character was one of beautiful symmetry. The elements of a religious life were blended in exact proportions, making a complete and harmonious unity.

"Death came to him suddenly, 'as a thief in the night,' but, doubtless, he was found watching.

"Such a conversion as his, followed by such a life, leaves no uncertainty that he has entered into rest. Under the great provisions of the gospel, a home in heaven is as much the result, as it is the reward of such a life.

"On the 10th of January, 1827, Brother Baker was married to Miss Esther Scott, with whom he lived most happily for more than half a century.

"The widow still lives, and is waiting with patient faith, for the call of the Master to a re-union on the other side.

I. S. BINGHAM."

CHAPTER LVII.

REV. BURROUGHS HOLMES.

"REV. BURROUGHS HOLMES was born in Poughkeepsie, New York, March 20th, 1801, and died in Mexico, New York, January 9th, 1878, aged 76 years.

"He removed with his father from the place of his birth, to Marcellus, Onondaga County, New York, in June, 1816. He writes, in a brief sketch of his life, from which the facts of his obituary are gleaned, that his parents were among the earliest Methodists in Orange County, New York, and that his father was licensed to preach before his marriage, and was, to the time of his death, a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church. 'So,' he says, 'I was, of course, rocked in the cradle of Methodism, and had the advantages of a religious education. From a very early period

in life, I was the subject of serious impressions. When not more than four or five years of age, I, at times, feared to close my eyes in sleep, lest I should die, and awake in eternity unprepared to meet the Judge. Often, then, did I seek a retired place, and pray that God would pardon my sins and give me a new heart.' The year next after removing to Marcellus, he was converted at a camp meeting which was held four days in the town of Owasco, about two miles south of Auburn. A few weeks after this, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. In December, 1820, he married Miss Phoebe North, of Marcellus, who, feeble with age and many infirmities, survives her husband. He writes of these early years as follows: 'I was occasionally urged to take a license to preach, but my answer usually was that I could do all the preaching I was capable of, without a license.' In 1832, he was licensed to preach. In 1834, he was employed by Rev. Gardner Baker presiding elder, to labor on Lysander Circuit. In 1835, he joined the Oneida Conference, and was appointed to Rome, to which place he was re-appointed in 1836. In 1837-8, he was stationed in Camden. In 1839, he was appointed to Mexico, to which place he was returned in 1840. In 1841, while his family continued to reside in Mexico, he served the Palermo charge. In 1842, he was again appointed to Mexico, and it was during this year that the revival so memorable in the history of that village occurred. In 1843, he was appointed to Pulaski. In 1844, he was made presiding elder of Syracuse District, which office he held for three years; and in 1847, he was appointed to the same office in the Oswego District. Here he continued for four years. In 1851, he was made an agent to Falley Seminary, and the same year he was elected delegate to the General Conference, which met in 1852, in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1852, he was appointed to Jordan; in 1853, to Rome; in 1854-56, to Rome District; in 1857-60, to Watertown District, when he closed the work of an active minister. In 1860, he came to Mexico to spend the residue of his days. No man in that village was more highly esteemed than was Mr. Holmes. His straightforwardness, his integrity and probity, his Christian character and unabated interest in all efforts for the church of the Lord Jesus, his intense patriotism, his broad love for all, endeared him to every one who knew him.

"He died well. The last few weeks of his life were weeks

of great suffering. Yet the grace of God enabled him to endure all with great patience and resignation. His closing days were days of great spiritual triumph. He found in Christ Jesus both full salvation and dying grace.

W. F. HEMENWAY."

Brother Holmes was the author's presiding elder while the latter was stationed in Camden, Oneida County, New York. Aside from the above very excellent Memoir, prepared by the esteemed minister whose name is subscribed at the bottom, we are prepared to adopt it as a record of our personal recollections of the man. It perhaps should be added that in 1861 he asked for a location, which was granted by the conference, and he sustained this relation to the close of life. He was much beloved by all the brethren of the conference, and their only regret was that he thought it necessary to sever his connection with the conference. But as the foregoing Memoir states, "He died well!"

CHAPTER LVIII.

REV. DANIEL O. EDGERTON.

THE author had not the privilege of a personal acquaintance with the subject of this short sketch. True, he had heard of him by both verbal and written reports, and all that he learned in regard to the character, labors and success of this young minister of Christ had produced a most favorable impression on the author's mind. In correspondence with Rev. B. S. Wright, one of our most highly esteemed ministers, we received from the latter the following communication, which is so full and concise, and besides having the advantage of having been written by one who understood him as perfectly, perhaps, as finite man can understand

his fellow man, we prefer to transfer it to our pages instead of our own thoughts and reflections:

“Rev. Daniel O. Edgerton was the son of Jedediah and Julia A. Edgerton, and was born July 2d, 1850, in Ava, Oneida County, New York.

“When but a little boy he was the subject of very deep religious impressions, and often remarked to his mother, that he expected to be a preacher of the gospel. In the month of September, 1868, after a severe struggle in prayer, when alone in his father's barn, he found the salvation which he had so long desired, and with a heart bounding with gladness, he hastened to tell his friends what the Lord had done for him.

“Soon after this he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. His conversion was remarkably clear; and from that period he endeavored faithfully to discharge his duties as a Christian. Very soon, however, he saw that it was his privilege to be ‘sanctified wholly’ and his earnest pleadings for a ‘clean heart’ were finally answered on the 17th day of June, 1870, when he obtained the blessing of ‘perfect love.’ This he evidently retained until he passed to the joys of heaven. In the exercise of his gifts in prayer and social meetings, it soon became evident to others that he possessed talents of a high order, and that God had work for him to do in the holy ministry. In 1870, he received license to preach as a local preacher. Great success attended his first efforts, and in February, 1871, he was employed by Rev. B. S. Wright, presiding elder of Rome District, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Rev. William Jerome, at Rome, Court street.

“At the ensuing session of the Central New York Conference, which was held at Rome, he was admitted on trial, and was appointed by Bishop Ames, to Rome, Court street, and in 1872, he was re-appointed to the same charge. There his pastorate was one of marked success, and so strong was his hold upon the affections of his church and congregation, that his re-appointment for another year was greatly desired, but was only prevented by the disciplinary rule of limitation.

“By the re-adjustment of conference boundaries at the General Conference of 1872, he fell into the Northren New York Conference, and at its first session held in Utica,

he was admitted into full connection, and was ordained deacon by Bishop Peck, from whom he received his appointment to Jordanville. In this year, May 29th, he was married to Miss Dollie Nisbet, daughter of Rev. Samuel Nisbet, of Lee, New York.

"This union was indeed a happy one, until dissolved by death.

"In 1874, he was re-appointed to Jordanville. In this year, he was prostrated by disease, which, in the judgment of his physicians, was caused by severe mental exertion, and which finally terminated in partial paralysis. Consequently, he was obliged to relinquish his charge, an event which was greatly regretted by his church and congregation, among whom his labors had been greatly blessed in the salvation of many precious souls,

"At the conference in 1875, he was granted a supernumerary relation, which was continued in 1876. In 1877, he was returned superannuated, and also in 1878. The trial to him, being thus early laid aside from his public ministry, was one of exceeding severity, and can be fully realized only by those who have a like experience. He was a young man of brilliant attainments, and had his physical strength been equal to the powers of his mind, and his zeal for the cause of Christ, he would have become a mighty power in the church and world for years to come.

"As a Christian, his character was particularly marked by sincere devotion, unaffected humility and meekness. With him there was no affectation. None would suppose from his perfectly unassuming manner that he was at all conscious of the fact that his mind was one of uncommon brilliancy. As a preacher, his pulpit ability was far above mediocrity, and probably unsurpassed by any of his age.

"The sermon preached by him at Phelps' Grove camp-meeting, when he was but little more than twenty years old, was one of great ability and of astonishing power. When but a few hours before the time for the public service at the stand, he was informed by his presiding elder that he would be expected to preach on that occasion, for a few moments a tremor passed over him, and he seemed almost like shrinking from the great responsibility. A few words of cheer and encouragement were spoken to him, and when the hour for service arrived, he was found at the post of duty, with a heavenly serenity upon his countenance, indicative of the

triumph over his fears, through a sweet and holy communion with God. After the preliminary services were concluded, in an unassuming and yet perfectly self-possessed manner, he announced his text, and then in a masterly style proceeded to lay open his subject to the vast congregation, whose attention was at once fastened upon the youthful ambassador for Christ. For a little time the immense throng seemed as if gazing in astonishment as they listened to the clear, burning truths of the gospel of Christ. As the brother proceeded the interest increased, and floods of tears were presently seen flowing from eyes unused to weep. From the commencement of the sermon the grade was ascending, and when the speaker had reached a certain elevation, it would seem that he could not possibly go higher, but still onward and upward he soared, flight after flight, until he seemed to be gazing upon the splendors of heaven, and the glories of that Saviour whom he had been presenting as 'able also to save them to the uttermost that came unto God by him.'

"The effect upon the people was wonderful! At the conclusion of the sermon, an excellent brother who had been previously requested to follow the sermon with an exhortation, arose to speak, but for some time utterance failed, and only the eloquence of tears told of the mighty emotions that were stirring in the human heart.

"O, how the waves of glory seemed to roll over the vast assembly; and when the opportunity was given for seekers of salvation to come to the altar for prayer, penitents not a few bowed with God's people at the mercy seat, and the shout of victory was heard in the camp of Israel. Hundreds who were present will never forget that scene, and eternity only can fully reveal the glorious results of that sermon.

"During most of the time from the period of his first prostration by disease, he suffered greatly, yet he endured all with remarkable Christian patience. Sometimes he indulged the hope that he would again be able to preach 'Christ and him crucified,' yet all his endeavors to regain his wasted energies were unavailing, while the skill of some of the most eminent physicians was baffled. Though cherishing a desire to live—if it were God's will—still it was evident that his thoughts were dwelling much upon heaven and eternity.

"Several weeks before his death, he gave his last testimony in class-meeting as follows: 'I stand on the platform

waiting for the heavenly train, satchel in one hand and ticket in the other. I know it will take me through, for it is stamped with the blood of Jesus.'

"Just before he was stricken with paralysis, he said to his sorrowing wife: 'I know I am not going to live; heaven seems so much brighter and more real than ever before; and the plan of salvation is so clear. It is like starting on a journey. You see the city in the distance, then nearer until it is in full view. So it is with heaven, grand and glorious! Many things more I would like to say, but I am so weak. Do not weep for me when I am gone, but sing the doxology.'

"Several ministerial brethren visited and prayed with him, and though at times it was difficult for him to articulate, yet he would summon all his strength and respond with a full, hearty Amen. The last scriptures which he expressed a desire to hear read were the 21st and 22d chapters of Revelations. At the reading of the 18th verse of the 21st chapter, he buried his face in his pillow and wept for joy. During the last week of his life, prayer was turned into praise. Every day he requested his wife to sing.

"His work was done, and though patient, yet he longed to go. His last words were: 'Angels! angels! sing.' Thus with intellect clear as noon-day, he passed triumphantly to his heavenly home, on the 22d day of June, 1878.

"His funeral was attended by a vast concourse of people at the M. E. Church in Ava, on which occasion a sermon was preached by Rev. B. S. Wright, of Rome, founded on St. John xiv, 3, in compliance with a desire of the deceased, expressed a short time before his death. Rev. A. Flint, of Ava, assisted in the services.

"God's ways are indeed mysterious to us. 'He buries his workmen, but carries on his work.'"

CHAPTER LIX.

REV. JOHN W. JONES.

THIS very excellent man and minister, being of Welsh birth, and retaining some of the peculiarities of the land of his nativity, was not as extensively known in all parts of the

conference as would have been desirable. His labors among us were more or less directed for the benefit of the Welsh people, who are more largely found in Oneida County in this state. As a people, they are intelligent, honest and industrious, and when under the influence of divine grace, pious and devoted. The Methodist Episcopal Church has always taken a deep interest in the spiritual and moral well-being of these adopted citizens, and in return the latter have proved themselves to be worthy of the confidence and esteem of their native American brethren, and have even furnished from their number several well-known and influential ministers, among whom may be mentioned our well-beloved fellow laborer, Rev. Erasmus W. Jones, a brother of the subject of this sketch, the former of whom has been in the foremost ranks of those who have been doing battle for the right, both in morals and religion for many years. Brother Jones, the subject of our sketch, was a man of a very peaceable and retiring disposition, never putting himself forward or obtruding himself upon the public view, so that he did not form as extensive an acquaintance, even among his ministerial brethren, as otherwise might have been secured. Moreover, his term of effective service in the conference was comparatively short.

That he was fully successful in his work while effective, none can doubt who knew the man—a sweet spirited, deeply devoted servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the absence of other data, we avail ourselves as usual, of the facts afforded us by his *Memoir* in the conference minutes of 1879, as prepared by our highly respected and very able brother, Rev. L. D. White, whose article we know we may freely transfer to our pages without fear of being charged with plagiarism. And here let me say our conference minutes, as published year by year, are invaluable sources of information, and should have a much wider circulation than they do.

But to proceed with the *Memoir* :

Rev. John W. Jones.

“Rev. John W. Jones, of the Northern New York Conference, died at Chicago, Ill., August 31, 1878, in his 82d year.

“Brother Jones was born at ‘Ofu-y-Gryddun,’ in the parish of Slanddrinwlrn, Carnarvonshire, North Wales, in the year 1796.

“He was the eldest of nine children, only two of whom survive him—William, in Wales, and Rev. Erasmus W. Jones, of Northern New York Conference. His parents were among the first fruits of early Methodism in Wales, and John gave his heart to God when quite young. When about eighteen years of age he went to Manchester, England, where he married. Some years later he returned, and settled in Carnarvon. Here he remained in business until the year 1831, when he came to America. In New York city, where he settled, through his instrumentality, assisted by the late Samuel Watkins, David Roberts and a few others, a small Welsh Methodist Episcopal Society was organized, holding its services in the old Forsyth Street Methodist Episcopal Church. It was in this little church, in 1832, that Brother Jones began to preach. In 1834, he moved to Trenton, New York, and engaged in business. Up to this time his preaching had been in Welsh, but now he was led by the advice of his brethren to begin preaching in English. Such was his acceptability as a local preacher, and such were his convictions in regard to giving himself wholly to the ministry, that he closed up his business and removed to Cazenovia to prepare himself more fully for the English work. Here he remained until 1836, when he was admitted into the Black River Conference on trial.

“During his connection with the conference in the effective ranks, he served the following charges, viz : Steuben, Canisteo, Williamstown, Welsh Settlement, Welsh Mission, Newport, Boonville, Oriskany and Trenton.

“For more than twenty-five years last past, Brother Jones was unable to do effective service on account of physical disability, but his zeal and devotion to the Church of Christ, and especially in the social means of grace, never abated. He was a real friend and help to the pastor and the church, wherever he resided. He buried the wife of his youth, in Trenton, in 1864. He afterwards married again, and was called to part with his last wife while residing in Utica, in

the summer of 1876. These were both noble women, and they contributed largely both to the happiness and usefulness of our departed brother. A little more than a year ago, his adopted daughter, Mrs. Dann, (whose faithfulness could not be excelled by an own child), removed to Chicago. Not thinking it wise to go so far west to remain, Brother Jones went to reside with a niece at Norwich.

"In July last he went to Chicago on a visit, and it is feared that the long journey, and the extreme heat which followed, shortened his life. His sickness was brief. His mind was calm and peaceful. If he was to die in this sickness, he said to his daughter, he was glad to be with her and have her care. He was all ready, having arranged his affairs, both temporal and spiritual.

"Mr. and Mrs. Dann brought his mortal remains back to Trenton, for burial beside his two wives. His funeral was attended by many of his old neighbors and several of his ministerial brethren. A sermon was preached by the writer, and we buried our brother with mournful joy and hope beside the family monument he had erected just before going West, thinking he could just as well attend to this himself, and save others the trouble of doing it when he was gone. He lived for both worlds and 'shall never die.'

"As a preacher, Brother Jones possessed more than ordinary strength. He was clear, methodical, scriptural and earnest. He was sound in doctrine and practical in its application. He knew how to handle the Word of God skillfully and effectively.

"As a Christian man, he excelled. There was true nobility about him. He was faithful in all his relations among men. He was unobtrusive in his deportment, but he never assented to error nor excused sin through fear to confess his Master, or defend the truth. As a man and a Christian, he commanded respect wherever he was known. There was no other subject so welcome to his heart as the subject of religion. As his pastor for some time in Utica, the writer found his society and influence refreshing and comforting. His presence was always welcomed by the church, either in the social meetings or in the public congregation. It seems a pity to spare such a man when there are so many who would improve society by leaving it. But God has taken him. A good man has fallen. 'He rests from his labors.' 'How blest the righteous when he dies.' L. D. WHITE."

CHAPTER LX.

FRANCIS ASBURY O'FARREL.

THIS devoted servant of God and his church, was born in the town of Pompey, Onondaga County, N. Y., July 24th, 1806. His father's name was William, and he, with the mother, had been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church for very many years, the father filling the office of chorister, class leader, steward, &c., and bearing largely the burdens and responsibilities of the church, and his house was ever the home of the itinerant. He remained a member of the church for fifty-seven years. His mother was an equally devoted woman. When a girl she lived in the family of Rev. Freeborn Garretson, of precious memory. During those years, the now sainted bishop, Francis Asbury, ever found a welcome home in that hospitable mansion. Such was Mrs. O'Farrell's respect and reverence for the worthy bishop, that after she had brought forth her first-born son, she called his name Francis Asbury, and when the latter was eight days old had him baptized, and at the same time consecrated him to the ministry. But the mother had a long and patient waiting before her hopes were realized, while during this waiting many prayers were offered to God that he would bring it to pass in his own good time.

When Francis was about ten years old, his father moved to Spafford Hollow, at that time almost an unbroken wilderness. Here he was almost entirely deprived of school privileges, and when he was about fifteen years of age, thinking that his father was too much burdened with the care of so large a family, he resolved, with his father's permission, to go and learn the trade of cabinet-maker. While learning his trade he enjoyed the privilege of attending a singing school, and acquiring a knowledge of the rudiments



REV. F.A. O'FARRELL.

of music. During this term at singing school, he made such proficiency in the science and art of music, that the next winter he began to teach a singing school. And here allow me to add in passing, that by nature Brother O'Farrell was all music, having a splendid voice, a well-trained ear, and being an enthusiast in his devotion to the science. But more of this hereafter. Before this period young Francis had very little taste for study or reading, but as he began the study of music he saw the necessity of pursuing other studies, and he applied himself so closely to whatever branch he took in hand that he soon acquired a good elementary English education. In fact, like many other well-learned men, he was self-educated, nor did he ever feel ashamed of his teacher; nor need he, for the possession of genuine learning was evident to all who came in contact with him in later years of his life.

In his childhood days, Brother O'Farrell was the subject of deep religious thought and feeling, and frequently engaged in prayer and sacred song with his family and young associates, but as he mingled with the world the early feelings of childhood were partially dissipated, and it was not until his twenty-fifth year that he was thoroughly re-claimed and began to feel a strong desire for the salvation of his fellow-men, and a sense of duty to call sinners to repentance. But, after many years of delay to obey the call of God, he finally yielded to his convictions of duty by accepting a license to exhort from Rev. W. Batchelor, preacher in charge on the circuit. His first license to *preach* was issued by that man of God, Rev. Zachariah Paddock, presiding elder of the district. Before receiving license to exhort or preach, he had for some time served the church in the locality where he resided as class-leader and steward, and after having received license as above stated he labored for ten years as a local preacher. At length, in 1851, through the influence of Rev. E. E. E. Bragdon, he was induced to give himself to the itinerant work of the ministry, and at the conference of the

above year, held in Oswego, he was received on trial and appointed to Central Square, having Rev. Geo. G. Hapgood as presiding elder. At the conference of 1852, he was continued on trial and appointed to Cleveland, Oswego County. At the conference of 1853, held in Watertown, Bishop Simpson presiding, he for some reasons preferred to remain on trial another year, and was stationed in Moira, Franklin County, but next year, 1854, he was received into full connection—having previously been ordained a deacon as a local preacher of four years' standing, by Rev. Bishop Hamline, and was sent to Malone station, in Franklin County, where he remained two years, P. D. Gorrie being his presiding elder. This station was one of the most important ones in the northern portion of the conference, and remains so to the present time, and he served the people with great acceptability and a good degree of success during the two years of his pastorate. In 1856, at the conference held in Syracuse, Brother O'Farrell was ordained elder by Bishop Waugh, and was appointed to Norfolk station, in St. Lawrence County, where he served faithfully one year. At the conference held in Potsdam in 1857, Bishop Baker presiding, he was stationed at Lawrence, in the same county, and the following year, 1858, he was sent by Bishop Ames to Sackets Harbor. In 1859 and 1860, we find him stationed at Washingtonville; in 1861 and 1862, at Gouverneur; in 1863, at Harrisville; in 1864, at Depeyster; and in 1865, at Oswego Centre.

In 1866, Brother O'Farrell's health having partially failed, he was given a supernumerary relation to the conference without an appointment, and in the following year, 1867, he was restored to the effective ranks and appointed to Fairhaven, in Cayuga County; in 1868, to Hannibal and successively for the four following years Jordanville, Cedar Lake, Starkville and Vermillion. In examining the conference minutes as regards the appointments of the ministry, when we came to the year 1869, we discovered what we at first thought was a strange omission by our most

excellent secretary, Brother Bingham, who had served the conference so long, so faithfully, and so correctly, as editor of the minutes; that is, we found that four of our districts, with all of the preachers embraced within their respective territories, had disappeared from the printed minutes of 1869, and with them the name of Francis A. O'Farrell. As we seemed ourselves to awake from a partial slumber, we remembered with some regret, a mighty struggle that was made at the General Conference of 1868, for the dismemberment of the old Black River Conference, that a New York Central Conference was authorized by the General Conference of that year, and the above four districts embraced within its bounds. Whether the above action was wise or unwise, justifiable or otherwise, it is unnecessary for the author to express an opinion at this late date. Suffice it to say that the dismembered Black River Conference was exceedingly dissatisfied with the above action, and waited patiently, and with true Methodist loyalty, until the next session of the General Conference in 1872, when, having full faith in the wisdom and justice of that large body of men, they asked that justice and equity might prevail, and their prayer was generously granted by the re-arrangement of conference boundaries, and the formation of the *Northern New York Conference*, and the discontinuation of the Black River Conference as hitherto known by that designation.

At the first session of the newly formed Northern New York Conference, held in the city of Utica, in 1873, Bishop Peck presiding, the greatest degree of harmony and Christian *oneness* among the preachers prevailed, and all seemed satisfied with the new arrangement. On the minutes of this annual session the name of Brother O'Farrell again appears, and as before stated he was appointed to Starkville and the following year, 1855, to Vermillion. In 1876, the conference was held in Potsdam, Bishop Andrews president, and at this conference Brother O'Farrell was transferred for the second

time to the superannuated list, which position he retained until the close of life, having thus far spent a quarter of a century in the regular work of a traveling preacher, besides some ten years a local preacher.

During the entire course of his ministry, our brother maintained an unspotted Christian character, and amidst all his wanderings from one extreme of the conference to the other, he ever presented the high-toned appearance of a Christian gentleman. In physical appearance, he was tall and straight, with a commanding and yet inviting countenance, just such a man in his outward make-up as would anywhere pass for a man of intelligence and moral worth.

In preceding pages we have alluded to his love of music. By nature he was richly provided with musical powers and taste; hence, some portion of his time, almost every year, was occupied on his various charges, in imparting a knowledge of music to others. In teaching music, he was remarkably strict in maintaining order and discipline in his schools, and being very sensitive to the purity of tone, he could, in a large school, detect the least variation from a correct sound. So sensitive at times was he in this respect, that when the members of the school became somewhat careless in their efforts to produce a correct tone, he would sometimes evince the greatest degree of nervousness, and frequently stop the tune, and appealing to the members, would exclaim: "Ladies or gentlemen," as the case might be, "unless more careful, you will break my heart!"

While laboring at Hannibal, his beloved wife, who had shared with him for many years the toils and trials of the itinerancy, died, and was buried at Union Village, near Oswego. Although she had some peculiarities, she was an excellent woman, an affectionate wife, and patient and long suffering amidst the ups and down of life. He subsequently was united in marriage to Miss Jane Cole, of Fairhaven, and who during all his future sickness administered to his wants, and nursed him in his sickness with all

that kindness and love that conjugal affection could inspire. To her the author is indebted for interesting reminiscences, particularly in regard to his last days and hours.

But to resume our estimate of Brother O'Farrell's character and talents as a minister of the gospel. He was more than an ordinary sermonizer. His sermons always bore the mark of patient study and application to his work; methodical, forcible, concise, and delivered with becoming authority as a herald of the cross. The Rev. H. Skeel, who prepared his *Memoir* for the conference of 1879, says of him :

"He was a man of method. For years previous and subsequent to his entrance upon the ministry, he was known to be the best teacher in sacred vocal music which that part of the state in which he resided ever had, and he desired all action in church and society to move with the same grand rhythm of sacred harmony. He was a deep thinker, a clear reasoner, and, skilled in the theology of his chosen church, he was its able advocate and defender. As a preacher, he was clear, sound, instructive and convincing; his sermons, essays, and conversation never equivocal, but plain and full of meaning. Among his brethren he was retiring and unobtrusive, never thrusting himself or his interest into unseemly frontage, but quietly and well meeting expectation in the trusts committed to him."

He was, also, a decidedly conscientious man. What he honestly believed to be right, whether in church discipline or affairs of a secular nature, he would adhere to in spite of all opposition; and, being exceedingly frank and outspoken, he sometimes used plain language in giving an opinion. This frankness sometimes stirred up bitterness on the part of those who felt themselves reproved, but the many who admired this trait of character in him, loved him all the more. As a friend, he was ever constant and unchanging, clinging to his friends as he clung to the cross, and always reposing confidence in those for whom he formed ties of friendship.

Brother O'Farrell was a self-made man. Indeed, every man is self-made, in an important sense, whether he gradu-

ates from the most renowned university, or from the district school house, or from no school house at all. If he is ever shaped and moulded into proper form, and acts like a man and for the benefit of mankind, it is because he has acquired an education by self-application and self-culture, however much or little he may have aided himself by outward helps and facilities. Of such make were many of the ancient worthies of the itinerancy of the Methodist Episcopal Church. All honor to their memories! But we hope no young man of the present day, who is aiming in his efforts for the ministry of the gospel, will abate one iota of zeal in acquiring, if he can, a liberal classical education because some have been self-made and useful men without it.

Brother O'Farrell, after his name was placed on the superannuated list, in 1876, retained that relation with continued failing health until the close of life. During those three years his sufferings were often intense, and his life frequently despaired of, but through all his sickness he maintained, through grace, a calm and steady composure and an abiding faith in God; and, without any doubt of the genuineness of his religious experience, he would frequently exclaim: "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith," and then add: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," &c.

One Sabbath some brethren called to see him. Too weak to speak with them, after shaking hands, he pointed heavenward and waved his hand in token of farewell! On the Tuesday morning following, a few minutes before his happy spirit took its flight, his pastor asked him: "How is it now, brother? Is Jesus with you now, as you are crossing the river?" His reply was: "Oh yes, yes; all is bright!"

Thus died our dear brother, Francis A. O'Farrell, on the 22d day of October, 1878, in the town of Sterling, Cayuga County, New York, in the 72d year of his age. His funeral took place on the 24th of the same month, Rev.



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REV. A. CHAPIN.

H. Skeel conducting the services, assisted by the pastors of sister churches. His remains were conveyed to Union Village, and deposited in the cemetery by the side of those of his former wife. The sweet-spirited singer himself has risen to join in nobler anthems around the throne of God on high.

In closing this account of the life and death of our dear brother, we acknowledge our indebtedness for many interesting facts relating to the former part of his ministerial life to his brother, David O'Farrell, who still survives the departed saint.

CHAPTER LXI.

REV. ALMON CHAPIN.

BROTHER CHAPIN was the son of the Rev. Harvey Chapin, whose Memoir appears in a former chapter of this work, and of his wife, Mrs. Dolly Chapin. He was born Nov. 25th, 1809, in that part of the town of Paris which now constitutes the town of Kirkland, Oneida County, N. Y. His parents being devoted members of the M. E. Church, and his father an able local preacher, the lad was early trained to regard the religious services of the church as worthy of reverence and love. His earliest recollection in subsequent life were of the ministry and membership of the Methodist Church, and he retained till the close of life a vivid recollection of his father and mother, each mounted on the back of their favorite horse, and taking himself and his only brother, Harvey E., one behind each, and riding one and a half miles to the old red school-house, where the far-famed circuit riders or the more humble local preacher dispensed the word of life. Those were days when the word fell from lips for the most part unlearned, but flowing from hearts all aglow with such

love to God and the souls of men, that they could not but be eloquent in the true meaning of that word. In those days a Methodist preacher could be distinguished almost as far as he could be seen. The luxury of carriages was a thing unknown, and mounted on his favorite and favored horse, himself arrayed with his white broad-brimmed hat, shad-bellied coat, standing collar, and very nearly destitute of buttons, a white neck-cloth, and a large pair of saddle-bags, filled at one end with a change of underclothing, and at the other with religious books, he went on his happy way, singing a favorite hymn, going to carry the word of life to the population of a four weeks' circuit, from two to three hundred miles around it.

Those were days when it would do for ministers and their wives to talk of sacrifices for the cause of Christ. The latter, during the absence of their husbands, would frequently be alone for weeks at a time, suffering more or less from privations. But all these were borne with the utmost patience and resignation without murmuring or repining ; but such days have happily gone by within the bounds of these eastern conferences, while in some parts of the great West the privations of a new country are still felt by the Methodist pioneer and his family. It is well, however, for the present race of Methodist ministers to remember what our fathers and mothers formerly suffered, and the hardships they endured in spreading scriptural holiness over these lands.

Young Chapin could not recall the time when he was not the subject of serious impressions. His father's and mother's prayer beckoned him on to a higher and better life. When three and a half years old he was sent to the district school, where, for a child, he made rapid progress in his studies. Rev. John Dempster being on a visit to his father's house, young Chapin besought his mother to buy him a book of Brother Dempster. The latter, overhearing the request, said to the boy : " If you will read from the book I will give

it to you." Almon at once complied, earned and received the book, and kept it for more than forty years as a relic of the past.

When Almon was six years old, his father removed into the adjoining town of Verona, where he remained twelve years, and where Almon attended school about three months in summer and winter. At the age of sixteen, he was converted, and lived a life of piety for some time, but neglecting to unite with the church, he afterward retrograded in or rather from the pathway of holiness, and lost his spiritual enjoyments, but in after years, came back penitently to his Heavenly Father's loving arms. About this time he attended, as a youthful spectator, a session of the Genesee Conference, Bishop George being the presiding bishop. The conference was held in a barn-like church, without paint or steeple, there being no outward or inward adorning; the place of meeting was a mile and a half from any village, and how they managed to provide homes for the preachers he did not seem to know, but he suspected that some families had to stow away some fifteen or twenty each somewhere on their premises, as was the custom at quarterly meetings in those days of old-fashioned Methodism.

As above stated, though he lost his religious enjoyment, he was by the force of parental example kept from acts of immorality. At the age of nineteen he had so far mastered studies of the district school that he began teaching, in which he seems to have been successful. "During his spiritual relapse, as before recorded, he was faithful in regard to some duties, regularly attending church, and working in the Sunday-school, but he made no profession of religion. He had the privilege of attending school for a short time at Cazenovia, and this, with his attendance at district schools, constituted his educational advantages. In December, 1833, at the age of twenty-four, he was married to Miss Lucina Sturdevant. In the fall of 1834, the Lord gave them a son, their first-born, who still lives. In 1835, he,

with wife and son, settled on a farm in Richland, Oswego County, expecting to make that his permanent home. In 1839, at a meeting held at Port Ontario, he was reclaimed, and he states that the next morning after a public declaration of faith, by the aid of his good wife, the family altar was erected. He immediately joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in a class connected with Pulaski station, Black River Conference. In the winter and spring of 1840, under the labors of Revs. G. C. Woodruff and H. Mattison, a grand revival in which fully three hundred were converted, was held in Pulaski, Brother Chapin helping what he could in the same. In the summer of 1840, he was licensed by Rev. G. C. Woodruff as an exhorter. From that time as exhorter and local preacher, he continued to hold meetings frequently in different school districts in the towns of Richland and Sandy Creek, for about two years. In the spring of 1842, he let out his farm, and at the session of Black River Conference held at Watertown, in July, he was employed by Rev. L. Whitcomb, presiding elder, to take charge of Colosse Circuit. About this time his daughter, about six years old, was so injured by being thrown from a carriage, that she soon died. Mrs. Chapin, who witnessed the accident, was so prostrated by the shock that she never more than partially recovered her strength, and permanent debility and suffering ensued. In February, 1843, another daughter was given them who still survives. On this first charge, during the first year, he records two hundred and thirty joined on probation. In 1843, he was at Colosse; in 1845, Palermo; in 1846-7, Lysander; 1848-9, Wolcott; 1850, West Oswego; 1851-2, Camden, and in 1853-4, Mexico, all of which were served with great acceptability, and many were added to the church. At the conference held in Weedsport, in 1855, Brother Chapin took a superannuated relation and moved to Sandy Creek, and engaged in the drug business, which business he followed for twelve years.

“At the conference of 1856, held in Syracuse, and at the earnest request of the church at Sandy Creek, he took an effective relation, and was appointed to Sandy Creek. Here he was pastor for three years, and at the end of that time, by his own request, he was put upon the superannuated list, which relation he sustained until his death. During these years about one hundred were added to the number of the faithful, many of whom are pillars in the church. After retiring from the regular work, he continued frequently to preach at different points, in compliance with invitations, for quite a number of years. A severe subsequent sickness, which he barely recovered from, left him with a permanent difficulty about the vocal organs, which rendered him unable to take part in the work of the ministry. This was a great trial to him. The subsequent years of his life were passed in business pursuits, with some degree of success. He served the town for years as their postmaster, druggist and town clerk, until the last year of his life, when he gave up all business and rested in the home he and his children provided. In his diary he refers frequently with great tenderness and affection to his family. He says: “Children have often been a source of sadness and tears, and parents have, like David, been led to exclaim, ‘O! Absalom, my son, my son!’ over ruined children and wrecked hopes.

“So have not I, thank God. I rejoice to know that those God has given us and spared to us, revere and love him, love and honor their parents, and in their turn, with their life companions, are trying to lead their children in the way of life.” Brother Chapin was, at the last session of conference, full of anxiety for the church in Sandy Creek; he taking great interest in having a new church edifice for the society. He remained intensely interested in this until the last of his mortal life.

“In his diary, Sunday, August 18th, he says: “My soul longeth for the courts of the Lord’s house; Sunday, September 1st—Another week of suffering is past, and I gradually

nearing my final home ; I am trusting, Lord, in thee ; Sunday, September 8th—Another lonely Sabbath ; shall I ever again go up to the house of the Lord until I pass to the temple not made with hands.” November 17th was our quarterly meeting ; with several of the brethren, we went to his house, and enjoyed a communion season with him, which was his last until he drank and ate with our Master in his heavenly home. Of this he was conscious. From this time, he went towards home rapidly ; when, upon the date above stated, he left for the upper conference, where superannuated preachers, with others, put on immortal vigor. His funeral services were held in the Methodist Episcopal Church at Sandy Creek ; the writer being assisted by Rev. H. Skeel, presiding elder, and Rev. Lucius Whitney. A large company of the church and citizens followed his remains to their resting place. Brother Chapin lived well, a good preacher, kind pastor, judicious counselor, loved and cherished in his home. He died well, and he lives in heaven.”

The greater portion of the foregoing sketch the compiler has taken from the printed Conference Memoir, prepared by Rev. J. B. Hammond.

To give, however, a clearer view of the inner life of our dear Brother Chapin, we will add his own statements, as found in a retrospection of his former life, which he recorded for the benefit of his family. He says :

“ And now, in concluding this retrospect, I desire most earnestly to offer my devout thanksgiving to Almighty God and our Lord Jesus Christ for the abundant mercies and blessings which crowded and crowned my life, all along these years to the present hour. Though toils and trials in common with humanity have fallen to my lot, from which none are exempt, yet mercies have infinitely outnumbered them all. I can never be sufficiently grateful for the goodness and mercy of God, which have followed me all the days of my life. The God of my fathers has been my shield and buckler.

“ I recognize the providential hand and care in appointing

my parentage. My father and mother were devoted Christians, in the proper sense of the word. That being the case, their children were taught by precept and example the fear of the Lord. They did not make the mistake of driving their children continually, but at suitable times and in proper ways, directly, and often without appearing to do so, instilled into their childish and youthful minds the fear and love of God. This judicious and careful training, followed by their earnest prayers with and for their children, brought forth legitimate fruit in after life.

"That same providence brought me into conjugal relations with one who also had been blessed with parental influences that led her in early youth to the cross of Christ. That connection, together with early training, had very much to do, as heretofore spoken of, in leading me to a religious life, and to the accomplishment of what little I may have done for the benefit of the world. I look back for more than forty years, and feel grateful for a relationship that has been of a nature to call forth the liveliest emotion of gratitude to him who, I believe, guided my choice of a companion of my youth, my manhood and my age.

"And I wish, also, to be thankful that I have not known by sad experience anything of the sighs that speak a father's woe. Children have often been a source of sadness and tears; and parents have, like David, been led to exclaim, "O Absalom, my son, my son!" over ruined children and wrecked hopes. So have not I, thank God! I rejoice to know that those whom God has given us and spared to us, revere and love God, love and honor their parents, and in their turn are, with their life companions, trying to lead their children in the way of life.

"Now as we (wife and I) are coming near the river, we are waiting, we are waiting, in quiet hope—hope that reacheth to that within the vale. We are pleasantly situated with our children and grand-children around us, with enough of this world's goods to meet our necessities, and favored as much as common infirmity and age will allow; and looking for a better country, that is, a heavenly,—the land that is afar off, and yet so near. What great consolation the grace of God affords, at any time of life, but especially when the eventide of life casts its lengthening shadows along our pathway, as we near the line where two worlds meet, and we enter the realm of the great unknown!

“And, as time rolls on apace, we have hope that the God of our fathers will be our God, and lead us to our journey’s end. Though I have enjoyed life, perhaps, as well as most persons, yet in contemplating the past and looking forward to that which is before, I can hardly say that if left to my own choice, I would go back sixty years and travel the same ground over again. Yet I have no cause to complain. The Lord has been merciful and has favored me above all I have ever deserved. His loving kindness and his tender mercies have been every morning and every evening new.

“And now I humbly trust that when life’s scenes shall at last fade away, that through the infinite mercy of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, we and our children, and our children’s children, down to the latest generation, both those who have gone before and those who shall follow after, may be found among the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

‘O happy, happy place,
Where saints and angels meet
There we shall see each other’s face
And all our brethren greet.’ ”

In closing this chapter, the author need only add that Brother Chapin was a good preacher, a good pastor, an able business man when laid aside from pastoral duties, a most affectionate husband, a kind and tender father, one of the leading men of the conference, an honor to mankind, and a blessing to the church and the world. He died peacefully on Sabbath morning, Dec. 1, 1878.

CHAPTER LXII.

REV. JAMES R. MOORE, A. M.

THIS comparatively young minister of the gospel was the son of Rev. William D. Moore, of the Oneida, then of the Black River, and finally of the Northern New York Con-

ferences, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was born in Rodman, Jefferson County, N. Y., on the 14th day of —, 1837. His father was at that time the preacher in charge of Rodman, and, as might be expected of a Methodist minister, he gave to his infant son that moral and spiritual training that fitted him for extensive usefulness in his youthful and riper years. At the early age of six years, he was converted at the family altar in his father's house in Canton. Here was an instance of childhood conversion, of the genuineness of which there could be little or no doubt. If a tree is known by its fruits, and if we may judge of the reality of conversion by a future life of piety and obedience to the claims of the gospel, and among other things, to unqualified obedience to parents, then we may reasonably conclude that the act of conversion in such a case is by no means spurious, or the mere fancy of a child—a vision that soon disappears, a morning cloud that soon passes away; but an act of divine mercy wrought in the heart of the child by which in future life he is able to resist the onslaughts of the great tempter, and come off conqueror. As a confirmatory evidence of the genuineness of young James' conversion, his father remarks, "that he was never guilty of an act of disobedience to his parents." The strong probability is that the child was sanctified from his birth, and the assurance of sonship given to him at the above early period of supposed conversion. Let this be as it may, James, from his early infancy, manifested those lovely traits of character and disposition that stamped him as a child of grace.*

During the years 1858 and 1859, he pursued an academic course of study at Fairfield Seminary, in Herkimer County, and graduated from that justly celebrated institution with

*Since the above was written we learn, in a letter sent us by his father, that James was converted in the parsonage in Canton, N. Y. It occurred in the night after family prayers, and the family had retired for the night. Next day being Sabbath he attended church and class-meeting and gave in his testimony of what the Lord had done for him. It was a clear case of childhood conversion.

honor to himself and his *Alma Mater*, in July, 1859. The following autumn he entered the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Connecticut, in an advanced class, where he continued to pursue his studies with diligence and delight until the tocsin of war was sounded throughout the length and breadth of the land, calling students from their classic halls, the farmer from his plough, the mechanic from his bench, the clergyman from his pulpit, and the lawyer and physician from their respective professions, to fill up the ranks of the loyal army called together by President Lincoln's bugle blast to defend the capital and fortresses of their country from the rebel traitors' maddened onslaught. Ambitious to excel in literary attainments though James was, his soul had too much of the patriotic fire burning in it to resist the call, and so, laying aside his books and studies, he enlisted, with many others of his fellow students, in the 13th Connecticut regiment of volunteers, and hastened to the front. He served faithfully and loyally for about a year, enduring great hardships and passing through many dangers, when his health having utterly failed, he was honorably discharged.

After his return to the North, his health somewhat improved. He was married to Miss Sarah P. Phelps, of Hopkinton, St. Lawrence County, New York, with whom he lived happily the few remaining years of his life. In 1863, feeling himself called to the work of the ministry, he joined the Black River Conference on trial as a traveling preacher, and was stationed at Brockets and Stratford, where he remained one year. In 1864, he labored at Ontario, where he also remained one year, and in 1865, he was appointed a professor in Fort Plain Seminary, Rev. Benjamin I. Diefendorf, of the Black River Conference, being the principal of the institution. At the session of the conference held in Fulton, in 1866, he, after due examination in the course of study prescribed by the conference, was admitted into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop E. R. Ames,

and appointed to Fairhaven, in the Oswego District, Rev. L. D. White being the presiding elder. For some reason, Brother Moore did not remain on the charge during the year. In 1867, his name appears in the conference minutes as being stationed at Florence, in Camden District, Rev. B. S. Wright, presiding elder. He remained two years on this charge. In 1869, by division of the conference, he became a member of the Central New York Conference, and was stationed at Redfield, a charge adjoining the one he had served the previous two years. In 1870, hoping that a change of air and climate would prove beneficial to his enfeebled constitution, he took a transfer to the Colorado Conference, and was appointed to Big Thompson and Cache La Poudre Circuit. In 1872-3, he was stationed at Trinidad, Colorado. Here his health became so greatly prostrated that he was obliged to retire from the active work, and the three following years sustained a supernumerary relation to the Colorado Conference.

In 1877, Brother Moore was transferred to the Northern New York Conference. His relation was changed to that of a superannuate, which relation he continued to sustain until the close of life. In June, 1878, with the hope of obtaining medical assistance from experienced surgeons, who had formerly been attached to the army, he obtained admission to the "Soldier's Home," located in Dayton, Ohio, but without receiving permanent benefit. His disease was chronic rheumatism, contracted in the army, and is well-known to be one of the most painfully excruciating diseases to which frail mortality is subject. He lingered along in the endurance of much suffering and bodily distress until the 8th day of February, 1879, when death released him from his sufferings, and permitted him to open his eyes upon the glories of the heavenly land, where

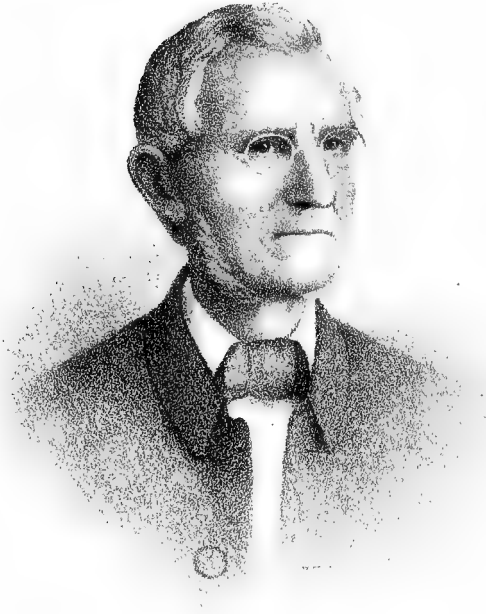
"Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more."

His mortal remains were deposited in the beautiful cem-

etery near the "Home," and at his own request, where they will lie undisturbed until the archangel's trump shall awaken the millions that sleep in the dust of the earth. After his death and burial at Dayton, Ohio, an appropriate funeral service was held at the home of his disconsolate young widow and seven children, in or near Nicholville, N. Y., the Rev. W. L. Tisdale, presiding elder of Potsdam District, preaching an appropriate sermon, his aged father coming from his home in Pulaski to attend the services and mingle his tears with those that wept. His aged mother would no doubt have been present, also, had not disease laid its hand upon her enfeebled frame and prevented her attendance. Since the services, held as above noticed, the mother also has been called to bid farewell to earthly scenes and sufferings. She died on the morning of the 19th of January, 1880, and has gone to meet the spirit of her beloved daughter Jane, and the spirit of her beloved son James, who, with the mother, are no doubt near the throne. But who can fathom the depth of sorrow of that lacerated heart of the aged father, who yet lingers on the shores of time, awaiting his exit to the land of spirits bright? In writing to the author, he sorrowfully says, referring to the recent death of his wife: "I am now all alone in the world. I am solitary in the midst of society. My wife was buried at Hermon. After my return to Pulaski I expected I would feel lonesome indeed. After musing for some time upon God's dealings with me, I exclaimed, in the words of one of our hymns:

'Yes, we must part, and parting weep,
What else has earth for us in store?
Our farewell pangs so sharp and deep,
Our farewell words, so sad and sore.'

And yet our bereaved brother enjoys the constant presence of his Saviour in the midst of his sorrows and bereavements, and anticipates a glorious re-union with the beloved wife, with whom he had lived for forty-six years, with his children gone on before, with his grand-children, who are yet on the way, six of whom are members of the Methodist



REV. A. ADAMS.

Episcopal Church, and giving tokens of a glorious family re-union in the mansions above.

CHAPTER XLIII.

REV. AARON ADAMS.

THIS eminent servant of God and of his church, was born in the town of Steuben, county of Oneida, state of New York, June 22d, 1796. His father, Moses Adams, was born in the state of Massachusetts, and his mother, whose maiden name was Phebe Hutchinson, was born in the state of Connecticut. They were married in the year 1790, and emigrated to Steuben in the year 1792, where Aaron was born. After attaining a suitable age, he assisted his father in the work of the farm, and remained an inhabitant of that town until he was thirty-four years of age. He was converted in the same town, in the year 1823, when he was about twenty-seven years of age. This, to him important event, occurred December 26th, of the last named year, an event which he carefully recorded in his writings. The spring after his conversion, he was baptized by Rev. B. Cooley, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. After six months probation, he was received into full connection, and appointed leader of the class or society in Steuben. In the summer of 1827, he was licensed to exhort by Rev. Wm. White, preacher in charge, and the following year, 1828, was licensed as a local preacher by the quarterly conference of Steuben Circuit, Rev. Daniel Barnes being the presiding elder who signed his license.

Being duly recommended by the quarterly conference to the annual conference as a proper person to travel and preach, he was received by the Oneida Conference on trial in the year 1830. His first circuit was Russia Circuit, on which he remained but one year, and we can judge of his success as a preacher and as a revivalist, when we state that he received during that year, one hundred and fifty-three persons on probation, as the first fruits of his ministry. His second and third years, he labored at New York Mills, in Oneida County; and at the close of his third year, 1832,

he was received into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Hedding. Having completed his two years' term at New York Mills, he was appointed to Stockbridge, where he also served two years, in the meanwhile, however, having been ordained elder in 1834. At the Oneida Conference of 1835, he was appointed to Little Falls station, where he also completed a two years' term of service.

In 1836, as before stated in previous chapters, the Black River Conference was organized at Watertown, by order of the General Conference, and Brother Adams falling within its territory, became one of its original members, serving the first year by completing his term at Little Falls, and the next year, at the session held in Potsdam, was stationed at Fairfield, where he completed his usual term of two years, during the years 1837 and 1838. In 1839, he was stationed at Rome, and at the ensuing conference of 1840, was appointed presiding elder of Herkimer District, on which he served acceptably two years. The next four years, from 1842 to 1845, he was the presiding elder of Potsdam District, and it was while traveling this district that the author learned more intimately to know him, and more ardently to love him as a man and a minister, and especially as a sub-bishop or presiding elder. His home at Potsdam village, was the welcome home of all the preachers on the district, especially the younger ones, among whom the author numbered himself. To show his fidelity to his younger brethren, and his anxiety for their improvement as pastors, the author begs to relate the following little incident which occurred at Brother Adams's: Being domiciled with the presiding elder and his excellent lady, who, by the way, he always accosted by the endearing name of Anna, at family prayers in the morning he called on his guest to lead the devotions of the family, which request the latter cheerfully acceded to. On rising from our knees after prayer, Brother Adams, with his watch in his hand and a smile on his face, said: "Well, Brother Gorrie, how long do you suppose you prayed this morning?" The latter replied, "Probably about five minutes." "Well," said he, "your prayer was just fifteen minutes long by the watch. I timed you on purpose. I have noticed that young preachers are apt to be long, especially in family prayer. Ordinarily, five minutes is long enough for a morning prayer. Your own family, or the families of your friends where you stay over night, are

generally hurried in the morning, and it is always best to meet their feelings and their wishes by having brief services at family devotions, whether evening or morning. If there is any error let it be on the side of brevity." What answer could be given, only that the recipient of such disinterested advice would try and profit by it, and he did try, and has always been thankful for the advice thus kindly and paternally given. And in this way this godly man endeavored to instill into the minds of the ministers a proper mode of action, not only in regard to private and social matters, but in regard to all their public duties. Still, Brother Adams was no cynic, no faultfinder, but intent only in doing his brethren good by "showing them a more excellent way."

While Brother Adams remained on the district, many glorious revivals occurred, the fruits of which remain to the present day, and he would gladly have been retained by both preachers and people on the district for another quadrennial term, did they not know of a law as obligatory as that of the ancient Medes and Persians, forbidding a continuance of the relation on the same district after four years' service. At the conference of 1846, held at Lowville, Brother Adams was appointed to Pulaski, where he preached one year, and the following year, 1847, was appointed to Vienna Circuit, where he remained two years. In 1849-50, he was stationed again at Fairfield, and in 1851-2, at Trenton; in 1853-4, at Floyd; in 1855-6, at Marcy; 1857-8, at Oriskany; 1859, at Floyd again. During the previous year, old age and deafness, or partial deafness, began to tell upon his hitherto rugged frame. He was not the strong man he once was. Besides, his dearly beloved companion had become the subject of severe physical affliction, and all these evils combined made it prudent, even necessary, for him to retire from the active work of the ministry, which he accordingly did at the conference of 1860. He remained on the superannuated list of the Black River Conference until 1868, when, by the division of the conference, he fell within the bounds of the New York Central, and remained a superannuated member of that body, until the re-union of the detached portions in 1872, when he falls back again into his old relation in the newly organized Northern New York Conference, which relation he sustained till the trials of earth were exchanged for the joys of heaven.

Brother Adams had been twice married. His first wife

was Miss Catharine Waldo, to whom he was united December 5th, 1819, when he was twenty-three years of age. She died in less than two years after marriage, namely, on the 21st of July, 1821, aged twenty years, leaving a child ten weeks old. Her death was caused by accidentally taking a dose of dissolved potash from a bottle, instead of a dose of dissolved salts in another bottle which stood near the former. Though sudden her death, and afflictive the dispensation, she was found ready for her seemingly premature departure. She was a member of the Baptist Church, and her dying words were,

"Jesus lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly."

October 29th, 1829, he married Miss Anna Fletcher, with whom he lived in great conjugal harmony and love, until Jan. 26th, 1874, when, from a life of suffering and distress of almost thirty years' duration, she exchanged the sorrows of the present state for the blessings of an endless life. Sister Adams was emphatically a good woman, calm, sedate, cheerful and affectionate, a true help-mate to her husband while in the enjoyment of health, and a comfort and solace to him when laid aside by bodily affliction. Thus life affords its compensations whether in health or in sickness. Three children had preceded her to the better country, all having died in infancy, so that Brother Adams, at the time of her death had but one child living, the daughter of his first wife, to whom the author is largely indebted for information.

After the death of his first wife, Brother Adams made it his home at his parents, in Steuben, and his motherless daughter was also kindly cared for by them and his dear sister, since the wife and now the widow of the late lamented George Gary. Since the death of his second wife, he had resided in the family of his only daughter in Steuben, not far from his birth place. His daughter above referred to, was married in early life, and, with her husband, Mr. Saul Miller, settled down in Steuben, and while so comfortably situated and provided for in the family of his dear daughter, Catharine A., he often expressed the wish that the few remaining years of his life might be spent in Steuben—to live there and die there and be buried there—so strong were his local attachments. But providence designed otherwise. On the 5th of November, Sister Miller's hus-

band died. - Her sons had no desire to remain on the farm, and so the family decided to remove to Rome. Of course where his daughter went he must go, but he spent many wakeful moments thinking of the contemplated change, but at last, when he saw the change was necessary, he cheerfully acquiesced in the arrangement, saying he would as soon go to Rome as anywhere, but would rather remain in Steuben; but addressing his daughter, he remarked, "Do as you think best." Accordingly, in March, 1879, the family removed to Rome, and as soon as the spring opened and the side-walks were cleared of snow, he began to walk about the city, and was surprised to meet so many old friends of former years, and at the very cordial reception accorded him by all who not only met him on the street and at church, but called upon him at his daughter's house, conversing with him and cheering him by their presence and friendship. Indeed, it rendered him happy and contented with his lot, which was indeed a pleasant one. His health also remained comparatively good up to the time of his death, which was somewhat sudden. He was out on the street calling on friends, to some of whom he said, "I am living ready any time when God shall call."

In his last days he was a model of patience, for, as his daughter writes, "he was tried and not found wanting. He was a man of prayer. Hours every day was he on his knees in his room. I often said to him: 'If it is necessary for all to pray as much as you do to get to heaven, few will ever get there.' But no day was he satisfied unless he had the full assurance that all was well with him. For many years he professed the blessing of holiness, and said the change was as great as was that of regeneration. Never in my life," she continues, "did I see him give way to temper. If disturbed he said nothing, but on his knees would implore divine help to bear all his burdens. His loss of hearing was a great trial to him, for he was naturally very social and enjoyed remarkably friendly associations, and it was often said to him in Rome, after his removal there, 'Why, how happy you look, Brother Adams!' and his reply would be, 'Why shouldn't I look happy? I *am* happy.' Religion was always first with him from the time of his conversion until the day of his death," which occurred May 9th, 1879.

We have, in other parts of this sketch, alluded to the moral and religious character of Brother Adams as a Chris-

tian and a minister. It will be proper to refer to him as a preacher. From the preceding pages we learn that when on stations or circuits he almost invariably remained two years. This, of itself, is not an evidence of eminent talents, but it is an evidence that the people to whom he was sent received him gladly, and were well satisfied to enjoy a continuation of his labors; that he was what many would call a popular preacher. What was the ground of this popularity? Learning? No! In respect to scholastic education, he had nothing whereof to boast. Not that he was by any means an illiterate man. He possessed what many of the so-called *litterati* fail to possess—sound, practical *common sense*. Here was found in him one grand element of success. A man among men, he understood human nature as much as it is usually given to men to understand each other, and he was not slow to act from the knowledge thus obtained. Was eloquence an element in the successful prosecution of his work? By no means. Very few successful ministers are gifted with less of the powers of oratory than was Brother Adams. In fact, he made no pretensions to eloquence, but was satisfied with uttering the plain truths of the gospel with simplicity and power, without ornamentation or flights of fancy. He was not a doctrinal preacher, entertaining his hearers with an examination of the comparative merits of this or that system of theology; nor an emotional preacher, drawing tears from eyes unused to weep; but his great success was owing to his practical application of the gospel to matters of every day life, in enforcing the rules of holy living. He was what may fitly be styled a *practical* preacher, descanting largely upon the duties of Christian morality in all their minute details and ramifications. He was in the habit largely of giving practical illustrations, from his own observation, in the enforcement of the truth, particularly as it regards the principles of honesty and uprightness of character. Hence, he would sometimes allude to the habit of borrowing and returning an article of less value than the one borrowed, as, for instance, borrowing candles six to the pound and repaying the same number with eight to the pound, or borrowing a cupful of tea at six shillings per pound, returning the same quantity in tea that cost only four shillings per pound. He was particularly severe on smuggling. Many might think such illustrations far too diminutive to engage the attention of a popular preacher, or benefit a large audience,

but as he often said, it is "the little foxes that spoil the vines," and if the author may be allowed to express an opinion in regard to the wants of the past and the present age, he would enumerate among these wants a style of preaching similar to the above that will enter as a detective into every man's house, his parlor, his kitchen, his chamber, his cellar, his store, his office, his closet, and *detect*—that is the word—whatever is wrong and blameworthy in that man's life and conversation. To do this requires, of course, a very large share of common sense. Let none attempt it unless they have this qualification.

Another duty frequently enforced by Brother Adams in his pulpit administrations, was that of the government of one's temper, and as a consequence, the proper government of the tongue, especially in the family. After laying down the rules strictly and forcibly, he would sometimes pause and say, "I ask no more of you than I require of myself;" and on one occasion, when dwelling upon the subject of having peace at home, and recommending the possession of a quiet spirit in the domestic circle, he said: "I try to govern myself by these rules, and never allow myself to be overcome by passion or temper. If you have any doubts on the subject, Anna, my wife, is here; you can ask her." This assertion corresponds with the testimony of his daughter, recorded in a preceding page, in reference to controlling his temper, and resisting by prayer and intercession a tendency to ill-temper and censoriousness.

We remark, finally, on the success of Brother Adams as a minister of Jesus Christ, that it was mainly attributable to his close walk with God, his constant clinging to the cross, his deep, ardent devotion to the work in which for so many years he was engaged. He was truly a man of *one work*—a workman approved of God, that needed not to be ashamed. But he has left his beloved conference and all the hallowed associations of earth, to join the dear companions of his youth and riper years, and the innumerable throng that no man can number.

CHAPTER LXIV.

REV. JOSEPH B. LONGSTREET.

THE substance of the following Memoir was copied from the original manuscript as prepared and presented by the Committee on Memoirs, at the session of the Northern New York Conference of 1880, at Ilion, New York. In copying, we retain the greater portion of the verbiage and statement of leading facts.

Joseph B. Longstreet was born in Onondaga County, New York, in the year 1835, and died in Mexico, Oswego County, New York, on the 24th day of May, 1879. Early in life he was married to a daughter of Brother Northway, of Onondaga Valley, who, however, did not live long to enjoy with him the blessings and felicities of a married life, as she died, leaving a young son an orphan to contend with the storms of life. The father, in a state of widowhood, subsequently married Miss Margaret Jacote, who, with a son and daughter, still survives the husband and father.

Brother Longstreet was reared in a Christian home, and received early Christian instruction, and at the age of fifteen was soundly converted to God, and became a disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. He also received a clear call to the ministry of the gospel. He, however, like many others, felt inclined to be disobedient to the "heavenly vision," and went vigorously to work to prepare for the study and practice of law. But the voice of conscience, and the whisperings of the spirit, greatly disturbed his quietude, added to which were the entreaties of his deeply devoted wife, who clearly seeing that the path of duty ran in another direction, led him at length to triumph over earthly ambition, to yield to the call of God, and, making a sacrifice of all his former plans and aspirations, he dedicated himself fully to the service of God and his church, and freely forsook his chosen profession of law, and turned his attention to the ministry of the Word. He accordingly received license to preach, and a recommendation to the traveling connection, and in the year 1866, he was received on trial by the Oneida Conference, subsequently admitted to full connection, and ordained deacon and elder. Among the charges that he served during a ministry of thirteen years, in the Oneida

and Central New York Conferences, were Peterborough, Chittenango, Camillus and Phoenix.

In 1877, he was transferred to the Northern New York Conference, and appointed to the charge of Pulaski station, to which he was re-appointed in 1878. In this place he became greatly endeared to the people, and the people to him, but alas! the seeds of mortality had become deeply seated in his frail system, and it soon became evident that his earthly career would not be a long one. As early as 1868, his health had become greatly impaired, and continued so until the close of life. While laboring at Pulaski, he was so feeble that he felt unable to walk, or even to stand erect in the pulpit while delivering his gospel message. His last sermon was preached while sitting in his chair. At the next session of the conference, in 1879, he was induced by his friends to take a supernumerary relation. Although very reluctant to leave the effective work, his physician and others saw clearly that he must desist from his labors, and he finally yielded to their advice.

Soon after conference, he removed his family to Mexico, in the same county, for purposes of rest, hoping to regain his health before the session of another conference, so as to take effective work again. He wanted to die, if die he must, with all his armour on. But God's ways are inscrutable to man, for it soon became apparent that his days were fast being numbered, and so the shadows lengthened, and he became convinced that his work on earth was done. He became calmly reconciled to our heavenly Father's will, and resigned his own will and all he had, including family and friends, into the hands of God. He continued gradually to waste away, until the final summons came that called him to his heavenly home. The closing scenes of his mortal life were singularly peaceful. Graciously spared the necessity of enduring acute pain, his end was eminently calm and serene. On being asked if all was bright, he emphatically replied, "Yes!" On being further questioned "If the gospel he preached to others was adequate in the hour of his extremity?" he replied: "Yes! else it hath no power." Soon he sweetly passed away to the bosom of his Redeemer and to the joys of heaven, where rest is for ever secured. The services attending his funeral were held in the Methodist church in Mexico, where a large congregation had assembled to pay respects to the memory of the departed servant of God. The

Rev. Harlow Skeel, presiding elder of the Oswego District, assisted by Rev. W. F. Hemingway and Rev. A. L. York, conducted the solemn services of the occasion. The body was then conveyed to Onondaga Valley, where services were again held in the Presbyterian church of that place, under the direction of the pastor, Rev. Mr. Seymour, assisted by Revs. C. F. L. Hawk, W. H. Curtis and A. L. York. His earthly remains were deposited in the beautiful cemetery of that lovely valley, there to await the resurrection of the just.

Brother Longstreet was possessed of a finely organized nature. Very sensitive to all approaches of sin, very gentle in all his intercourse with others, and very courteous to all, he won friends everywhere without seeming to make an effort in that direction. His friendships were deeply rooted, and were of the kind that were enduring. He was a true sympathizer with the afflicted and distressed. No matter how much of sorrow and sadness might fill his own heart, he always had smiles and cheer for others in affliction. As a Christian minister, he was eminently successful in his calling, scattering blessings wherever he went, whether as preacher or pastor. Simply as a Christian he was devotedly pious. With him religion was a reality, and Christ a personal Saviour. In him he found a refuge from the storm and a shelter from the blast—a strong tower into which he could always flee and be safe. As a brother minister, he was greatly beloved by his fellow-laborers, and none loved him so well as those who knew him best. But it was in the bosom of his family that his moral worth was fully known, as it is in every man's family, be he minister or layman. As a husband affectionate, as a father thoughtful and tender, as a neighbor kind and obliging, as a citizen upright and loyal, and as a man "a man among men," laboring for man's good in the present state of being, and in the land of spirits where we all hasten.

Peace to the memory of the departed one !

CHAPTER LXV.

REV. LUCIUS WHITNEY.

"REV. LUCIUS WHITNEY, of the Northern New York Conference, was born in Mexico, Oswego County, June 6th,

1813, and died at Port Ontario, in the same county, May 29th, 1879.

"His early religious training was by his godly Presbyterian mother, and he was converted at the age of eighteen. Subject from early youth to deep and constant convictions for sin, that conversion was most thorough, and at once followed by a clear persuasion of divine call to preach the gospel.

"He united with the Protestant Methodist Episcopal Church, and from it received exhorter's and local preacher's license and ordinations; serving as local preacher for twelve years in voluntary and regular appointments of his own, and aiding the regular ministry in revival work with much acceptability. For ten years of this time his residence was in or not remote from the village of Chaumont, New York.

"In 1851, Rev. J. H. Lamb came to that village to attend a revival meeting, and advised him to enter the itinerant work in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Though under disadvantage from lack of early school opportunities, save what was derived from a brief time in the Mexico Academy, ministerially encouraged, at that late time in life, he undertook and creditably passed the required course—entering the regular work, first under the presiding elder, Gardner Baker, and then in the Black River Conference, and for twenty-six consecutive years he did his work, never losing a single Sabbath by sickness, and very few, if any, by storm or other hindrance. He invariably reached his appointments, whether the congregation did or not.

"By much and careful reading, he became familiar with the best writers and thinkers of his time, and was especially versed in religious literature and the theology of his own and sister churches.

"The characteristics of his ministrations were mature and thoughtful reflection, soundness of doctrine, scriptureness of statement and language, giving them the solidity and weight of undeniable truth, rather than mere brilliancy of utterance. Not a man of hasty speech, it was nevertheless known of him, on all occasions when truth and righteousness were disparaged, or liable to injury, to wait his moment and surely give his solid testimony for God and the gospel, not offensively, but with the firmness and kindness of that Christian love by which his whole being was ever ruled.

"December 16th, 1835, he was married to Miss Clarissa Ingersoll, and for over forty-three years found by this union a faithful and most helpful companion in all his life work, one whose family, with many others beside, will rise up in the day of God, 'and call her blessed'—and one whose kind ministering was for him to life's end.

"It was his glory and with emphasis, that his children—three of whom settled in life survive him—and their companions and their children, as they came to years are worthy members of the church of his choice.

"One of them, born in ministry, now the wife of Rev. S. T. Dibble, knows well her mother's work and will not fail to do it lovingly and well. His youngest, a daughter of four years, has waited for years in heaven the coming of her father.

"As a minister, he was of the faithful, patient, hard-working kind, his fields of labor requiring him thus to do the work, inviting only to those whose call was felt to be to save the perishing. By him churches and parsonages were built or repaired, and charges lightened or relieved of indebtedness, while revivals frequently sprung up under his labors.

"As a pastor, full of work, he was faithful in visitation, counsel, prayer and exhortation to godly living, while his whole character showed deep communion with God. Scripturally, he was a holy man in all manner of conversation, ever in sympathy with the most devout, utterly devoid of a selfish spirit, and possessing largely that of unvarying cheerful piety.

"About two years ago, failing health placed him among his superannuated brethren, and the decline continued to the end of his life. When prevented attendance at last conference, he said, 'Tell the brethren, if I am not permitted to see them again, that gospel I have preached comforts me now in sickness, is precious, and I am ready to die.'

"His last brief sickness seemed yielding to recovery, when by a sudden stroke, a few hours of insensibility and he was gone.

"A shock of corn fully ripe and fit for his Master's use.
H. SKEEL."

Pulaski, July 2d, 1879.

NOTE.—Rev. Brother Skeel will excuse the transfer of the above comprehensive obituary from the *Northern Christian Advocate* to these pages.

CHAPTER LXVI.

REV. CYRUS PHILLIPS.

ANXIOUS as we are to embrace within the limits of this volume, as far as possible, as many of the biographies of our dear departed brethren in the ministry, who died while members of the Black River or the Northern New York Conferences, we find ourselves in the latter part of the work necessarily circumscribed for want of space, especially in those cases where the friends and survivors of the departed have not furnished the necessary *material* for an extensive Memoir. In many cases we would have written more extensively had we possessed necessary facts and statistics, but in some cases a few of our prominent and highly useful brethren have taken their transfer to the church triumphant and but a mere sketch of their labors, trials and successes are left on record. But God keeps a book of remembrance for those that loved him. In the absence, therefore, of sufficient data, we gladly turn to the annual minutes of our beloved conference, and if these are not as full and replete with facts and incidents as would often be desirable, it should be remembered that the same causes may exist in the present case. Besides, conference Memoirs are necessarily limited in extent, because of a want of time to prepare them at conferences, and mostly a want of space in the printed annual for their insertion. We accordingly, as in the present instance, transcribe in these pages the appropriate obituary, written by Rev. H. W. Bennett, a beloved brother long and familiarly acquainted with the subject of this sketch, and to whom the conference and the public is frequently indebted for articles on similar subjects prepared for the minutes, or our excellent church paper, the *Northern Christian Advocate* :

Rev. Cyrus Phillips.

“Rev. Cyrus Phillips, a member of the Northern New York Conference, died at Oswego Falls, N. Y., July 6, 1879, aged 72 years.

“The subject of this sketch was a son of Rev. Asa Phillips, of Marcellus, N. Y., a man of marked ability and reputation. In this pious home, young Cyrus was trained until he was

about sixteen years of age. Brother Phillips' life has been a varied and busy one until within the last seven years, during which time he has been compelled by disease to remain quietly at home.

"His earlier manhood was spent in active business life. He came to Fulton in 1824, and remained several years with his brother Asa, then in business on the west side of the river. Subsequently, he removed to Oswego, where for a time he was engaged in the livery business. He afterwards, in turn, became interested in a stage route, was captain of a packet, and superintendent of a line of packets running between Oswego and Utica. In 1843, he entered into a successful mercantile business in Fulton, and he is remembered as a very active and pushing business man. He was possessed of a business ability of a high order, and, had his duty led in that direction, he would probably have continued one of the leading business men of Oswego County. But the Master needed him for other work. About the winter of 1846-7, he was smitten with the typhoid fever, and for a time his life was despaired of. During this illness, and when he was very low, he promised the Lord if his life was spared, he would devote it unreservedly to his service. Brother Phillips often during his life remarked that he first gave his heart to the Lord when but seven years of age, and felt that his life-work was in the Christian ministry, but he stifled the call and turned to the world. His conviction, however, on his sick bed was deep and earnest and his conversion clear, thorough and positive. He knew at once he was saved and so did all within reach of his influence. On his restoration to health, he sought out at once the meetings in the Methodist Episcopal Church in this place, of which Rev. A. J. Phelps was then pastor, and soon he became a member of the same. He at once heard the call to enter the ministry, and immediately began arranging his business so that he might enter the conference untrammelled.

"He joined the Black River Conference in 1852, and served, in the order named, the following charges: Victory, Rose, Evans Mills, Three Mile Bay, Turin, Copenhagen, Rodman, Frankfort, Vienna, Scriba, Westmoreland and Boonville. At this latter place; in 1872, he was prostrated with an apoplectic fit, resulting in an inability to use language, and soon after he returned to Fulton. He has been unable to preach since, though his earnest soul has yearned

for the work. His piety was marked and deep. No one who knew him doubted the sincerity of his motives or the purity of his heart. He was wholly devoted to the Master and his work. His preaching was clear, methodical, earnest and spiritual, and of a higher grade than the average.

"For a number of years he was the recording secretary of his conference. It is needless to say that he filled that office to the entire satisfaction of his brethren. He was not a talker on the conference floor, but he was ever an interested and close observer. During his superannuation, so far as his strength allowed, he stood side and shoulder to his pastor, and he was as good and faithful a layman as he had been preacher. His sufferings were considerable at times, yet he longed and hoped to be able to preach the gospel a few times more; but physical disabilities would not allow. Whenever the church bell rang, he would often weep if unable to answer its call to prayer. But now his work is done, and his sufferings are over, and he has passed on to his reward. Truly, 'the memory of the just is blessed.' He held a high place in the esteem of his brethren in the ministry, and of all the churches where his lot was cast.

"His religious experience to the very last was triumphant. Without a doubt or a fear, he passed from his earthly to his heavenly home, for he 'read his title clear to mansions in the skies,' where he has joined in a happy and longed-for reunion with loved friends who had passed on before.

"Brother Phillips was twice married, the first time, Feb. 19, 1834, to Miss Ann Burt. She died April 26, 1853, leaving four children, now living. The second marriage was with Miss Lydia Richards, Dec. 1, 1853, who survived him with four children living. His funeral services were attended at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Fulton by a large number of loving friends, several members of his conference participating.

H. W. BENNETT."

Fulton, N. Y., Nov. 8, 1879.

We will add a few personal remarks in relation to the subject of our sketch, as elicited from our rather limited sources of information and frequent personal interviews with him as an active member and officer of the conference.

Brother Phillips had a tall and commanding form, with a stately appearance and gentlemanly manners. One who could inpress upon the mind of the stranger an idea of per-

sonal worth and true dignity of character; easy, affable, and unassuming, he was approachable to all and by all, and hence was well adapted to mingle with all classes of society, whether in the higher or more lowly walks of life. In a word, he impressed every one whom he met as being a plain, dignified Christian gentleman.

As a scholar, if not prominent, he was at least respectable. Notwithstanding his early days were mostly spent amidst scenes and in business pursuits not supposed to be promotive of scholarship, yet, when he gave himself up to the work of the ministry like the apostles of the Master, he ventured, and trusting in the Lord, and conscious of the latent power within him, and applying himself assiduously to the different branches of conference study, he passed a highly creditable examination during each of the four years of his conference course. Among other qualifications for the ministry and for general business, he was a beautiful penman, and for this reason for several years he was chosen conference journal secretary, an office of great importance and responsibility, the duties of which office he discharged to the entire satisfaction of his brethren in the conference and especially his fellow secretaries.

We now leave this good man to his final rest till the "heavens be no more." When Brother Phillips, and the thousands of Christian heralds who have preceded him, and the thousands who may follow after him, shall as a part of the vast assembly of the church of the first born in heaven, unite together in anthems of praise to him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb forever.

CHAPTER LXVII.

REV. WILLIAM C. LOOMIS.

THIS in some respects unfortunate minister, was born in Westmoreland, Oneida County, New York, in the year 1809, and in the same town or vicinity he spent the greater portion of his life, as it is said that during no portion of his life did he reside more than a day's journey by horse and wagon from the place of his birth and funeral. His educational advantages were very limited and he was as some

think, not fully qualified for the work of the ministry, and yet he possessed many noble traits of character, that rendered him a favorite with many. He was converted when he was about twenty-four years of age, under the ministry of Rev. Dan Barnes, in the town of Lowell, in the county before named. His parents were Congregationalists, but their son in boyhood years had become tinctured with infidelity, and when led at last, through the influence of Methodist preaching, to embrace the truth, his conversion was of a convincing and demonstrative character. The revival under Brother Barnes resulted in the erection of a new church in Lowell, and served more fully to establish the doctrines and usages of Methodism in that place.

At the early age of twenty-one, young Loomis was married to Miss Sabrina Dean, with whom he lived in great harmony, for a period of thirty years, when, in 1857, she died, and left her husband to mourn his own and his family's loss in the departure of their loved one. He subsequently was married again to another lady, who also died, leaving him a widower.

After his conversion in 1833, he became a bold defender of the faith as it was once delivered to the saints, and was soon licensed to exhort, and afterward to preach as a local preacher, in which latter capacity he served for some years. In 1840, he joined the Oneida Conference on trial, and was appointed to New Hartford, and the following year, to Cherry Valley. In 1842, he was received into full connection and stationed at Winfield, where he remained two years; 1844, at Clinton; 1845-6, at Augusta; 1847, at Litchfield; 1848, at Cherry Valley. In 1849, he was superannuated; 1850, made supernumerary, and in 1851, he located, and thus ceased to be a member of the Oneida Conference, having retained a relation to that body as a traveling preacher for eleven years. He continued to serve as an ordained local elder within the bounds of that conference, until by a change of boundaries and name it ceased to exist as an annual conference. This act of withdrawing from the conference was, no doubt, the great mistake of his life. He engaged in business, but was not successful, and in ten years lost all his property. He spent the most of his time in taking orders for fruit trees, traveling from place to place among his friends and acquaintances, preaching frequently, and sustaining his reputation as a faithful local

preacher. He kept a diary, in which is found recorded the text from which he preached his last sermon.

Although generally unsuccessful in business matters, he was of a hopeful temperament, and always expected to retrieve his losses. No disaster or misfortune seemed to discourage him. In 1877, while stopping at the house of a friend, near Cortland, he was stricken with paralysis, from which he never fully recovered; and in this state he remained for some time, depending on the charity of friends for sustenance and care, but partially lost sight of by his brethren in active life.

At the session of the Northern New York Conference in 1878, held in the city of Rome, Bishop Haven presiding, a rumor was circulated on the conference floor that a Methodist preacher was in the Oneida County poor house. On inquiry being made, it was ascertained that his name was W. C. Loomis; that he had formerly been a traveling minister; that he was now a local minister; that some time during the preceding year he had been sent by the authorities of Cortland County to Oneida County as a pauper, and lodged in the county alms house.

On ascertaining these facts, a general excitement was produced among the ministers of the conference and the citizens of Rome and other places, and after one or two electrifying speeches by Chaplain McCabe and others, money was at once raised to support him comfortably for at least one year. Arrangements were at once made by the conference and the church at Rome to provide for him in the future. The same day he was brought from the county house to the seat of the conference and with much rejoicing presented by Bishop Haven to the conference, and given a chair by the side of the bishop. He was also restored to membership in the conference. Brother Loomis, though feeble in mind, seemed to comprehend and appreciate to some extent the kindness shown him, and especially the great change that had taken place in his circumstances within the last few hours. His situation during the remnant of his life was at least comfortable, and by him, so far as reason still sat enthroned, duly appreciated as the result of brotherly kindness and Christian charity. Enjoying thus the friendship of his brethren, though the most of them had been entire strangers to him prior to the last conference, he continued to linger upon the shores of time until the 23d of August, 1879, when

he quietly fell asleep in death's embrace after a final illness of three weeks' duration.

His funeral was attended at Westmoreland, the place of his birth, and a handsome tombstone was erected over his grave, which bore the following inscription: "Erected by the Northern New York Conference."

At the same conference before alluded to, his name was placed on the list of superannuates, and after being comfortably domiciled in a kind Christian family, he was regularly visited by his pastor and lay brethren, who found him, from time to time, happy, hopeful, cheerful and contented. He left no children living, three having preceded him to the "home beyond the tide."

Brother Loomis is represented as having been a good preacher. Possessed of a retiring yet cheerful disposition, always pleasant and always welcome to the hospitality of his friends, he had the elements of a useful, successful minister. His great lack seemed to be a want of confidence in himself, and over-confidence in others. Had he trusted less to others, and exerted himself more fully in his own behalf, had he at times been less visionary and more realistic, having fewer air castles and more solid rock in relation to secular matters, he might have succeeded in business. Every man has his errors, and Brother Loomis was not exempt; but he always, to the last, retained his love to God and the church of God, and though dying poor, we doubt not he is now enjoying the riches of his heavenly home, that he has entered "the city that hath foundation, whose maker and builder is God."

CHATER LXVIII.

REV. LYMAN BEACH.

THIS aged minister of the gospel was but little known during the days of his effective service among the preachers or lay members of the old Black River Conference, his appointments having always been farther south or west than the original bounds of the above conference, and having become a member of the more recent Northern New York Conference, at its organization in 1872. We are happy

however, at being able to present to our readers an interesting account of his life and labors as furnished by Rev. J. W. Simpson, of Knoxboro, New York, for the *Northern Christian Advocate*:

"Rev. Lyman Beach, a superannuated member of Northern New York Conference, died at the residence of his son, John Beach, in the town of Augusta, New York, January 30th, 1880, aged 87 years.

"Lyman Beach was born December 21st, 1792, in the town of Wallingford, Connecticut. In his youth he was preserved from those habits of vice and dissipation which unguarded youths frequently form. At the age of seventeen years, while attending meetings under the direction of Rev. Elijah Hedding, presiding elder in the New England Conference, he was powerfully converted, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, much against the will of parents and other relatives; but he had found the priceless pearl in his heart, and, in keeping with his usual decision, he resolved to abide with the Methodist. In 1811, he was united in marriage with Miss Patty Doolittle, who was about his own age, with whom he lived in love, peace and friendship about sixty years. To them were born eleven children, ten of whom became heads of families. He says of his dear wife, 'She was a kind, loving and pious companion, an affectionate mother and an example of meekness and patience.' She died in great peace, January 21st, 1871, thus preceding him in the glory-land nine years. In 1813, Brother Beach received license to exhort from Rev. Ebenezer Washburn, preacher in charge on the old Middletown and New Haven Circuit, which he used with acceptability. In 1814, he was drafted, and served in the war with Great Britain. While absent from home and exposed to the temptations and trials incident to camp life, he lost his religious enjoyment, and, as he says, 'backslid and left the church.' In the year 1818, he moved into the town of Stockbridge, New York, and bought him a farm; the country was new, and by dint of hard work and perseverance, he succeeded in getting himself a home. In a revival of religion, that was held in the town shortly after his arrival there, he was reclaimed, and joined the church of his first choice, and settled down by faith on the sure foundation, Jesus Christ the Lord. In 1820, he received exhorter's license, and held meetings in school-houses and

private dwellings, as opportunity favored. In 1822, the church gave him a local preacher's license, which he used with great acceptance until recommended to the annual conference for admission. He served one year under the presiding elder, Rev. Daniel Barnes, and in 1828, was admitted on trial in the old Oneida Conference, and was ordained deacon by Bishop Roberts. In 1833, he was ordained elder by Bishop Hedding. Father Beach was a good preacher. The excellency of his character, and the superiority of his gifts, rendered his preaching highly acceptable, and secured for him not only large congregations, but more than ordinary attention.

We do not claim for him a place amongst men distinguished for their deep erudition, practical research, classical taste, rich and creative fancy, but he had a sound judgment, clear and comprehensive views of divine truth, a retentive memory, a ready command of language, a pleasing address, and, above all, was favored with the 'unction of the Holy One.' He was a 'workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.' As a preacher, he was abundant in labors, traveling on horseback over his long circuits, and receiving but little remuneration for his labors. Many in this town remember him in his arduous labors, and his peculiar traits of originality. He was always equal to his tasks. He took great delight in setting forth the doctrines of the Methodist Church, and was singularly ready to battle in argument, the peculiar tenets of Calvinism. Brother Beach was a man admirably adapted to the work of the Methodist itinerancy. He was a man of faith and prayer. Prayer was his sweetest and most refreshing exercise. His soul seemed to gleam with seraphic ardor as he drew nearer and nearer the throne of grace; he told me it was his element of life. He was a man of great cheerfulness. The religion he partook of was not cold and joyless, unaccompanied by any evidence of God's forgiving mercy, or encumbered with doubts and fears. Being 'justified by faith,' he had 'peace with God.' It was truly refreshing to be even a short time in his presence; his ardent, friendly feeling cheered one like the sunshine. How often have we seen his countenance beaming with pleasure and delight, as he endeavored to transfuse his happy spirit into others. 'He put on charity.' He was eminently a peacemaker; and his efforts in this God-like work were often crowned

with success. His conscientious attachment to the Methodist church must not be forgotten. He loved her doctrines and polity. He identified himself with her in its day of suffering and reproach and persecution. But he was not ashamed of that. Nothing could make him dis sever or conceal his attachment for his religious associates. No one was ever more diligent in the discharge of his duties as regular as the conference returned him, or sent him to his field of labor. He was faithful at his post until enfeebled health compelled him to retire from effective to a superannuated relation in his conference. He enjoyed a green old age, his faculties unimpaired, he read, and prayed, and enjoyed communion with God. In my visits with him during my pastorate on Knoxboro charge, I found him happy, hopeful and trusting. During the past nine months he has been confined to his bed, and gradually sinking to his last rest, which occurred Friday, January 30th, at 9 o'clock, A. M. He exchanged this malarial atmosphere of earth, for the perfect health of heaven and endless glory.

"The following is the list of charges that he served: In 1827, Palatine and East Brocketts Bridge; 1828-9, Camden; 1830-31, Lebanon; 1832-3, Brookfield; 1834-5, Norwich; 1836-7, Westmoreland; 1838-9, Litchfield; 1840-41, Deansville and Clinton; 1842, Sangerfield; 1843-4, Augusta; 1846, Smyrna; 1847, Hamilton; 1848-9, Brookfield; 1850, Onondaga; 1851, Onondaga mission; 1852, Camillus; 1853-4, Lowell; 1855, Westmoreland; 1856-7, Bennett's Corners and Indian missions; 1858, superannuated. He lived in Verona until 1874, then he went to live with his youngest son, John, who lives in Augusta; at whose house he died. 'Father Beach,' like the hero of many a well-fought battle, covered with glory, has gone from labor and suffering to rest and reward.

"He leaves nine children, Rev. Whiting Beach, Lyman and Charles Beach and Mrs. Voorhees, of Mansfield, Pennsylvania; Chauncey Beach and Mrs. Spaulding, of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin; Mrs. Dann, of Verona, New York; John Beach, of Augusta, New York, and Mrs. Rev. W. E. York, of Stockbridge. Thus has passed away one of the oldest ministers of the conference, one of the pioneers of this section, and one who exerted a powerful influence for good. 'Servant of God, well done.' J. W. SIMPSON."

Knoxboro, New York, Feb. 6th, 1880.



REV. J. T. HEWITT.

CHAPTER LXIX.

REV. JOHN T. HEWITT.

THE compiler of this work in attempting a sketch of the life and labors of Brother Hewitt, is satisfied that he can furnish nothing more appropriate or that will be more acceptable to the reader than the following article, which appeared in the columns of the *Northern Christian Advocate*, and was written by his pastor, Rev. H. W. Bennett :

Rev. J. T. Hewitt.

“Rev. John Templeman Hewitt was born at Swaffham, Norfolk, England, March 28, 1814. He died at his residence in Fulton, N. Y., Feb. 13, 1880. Though he had failed rapidly for the past year or two, he was comparatively well until about six weeks previous to his death.

“At a very early age he was bound out as an apprentice to a printer. He served seven years in learning this trade. At about fifteen or sixteen years of age, he was converted and joined the people called Methodists, then a despised sect. It being soon found that he was a young man of piety and talent, he was at sixteen years of age made a local preacher and sent out to supply vacant and destitute places. Many a time he would take a bit of bread and cheese in his pocket on a Sunday morning and walk eight or ten miles to preach the gospel in some barn or private house. At the close of the morning service he would at once start on foot for his next appointment four or five miles distant, stopping on his way by a brook to eat his bread and cheese, never deeming all this a hardship, so glad was he of an opportunity to invite sinners to Jesus.

“Thus for fifteen years did he serve on the ‘ministerial plan,’ of the English circuits, as a local preacher, all this while laboring with his hands for his daily bread. It is but just to say that he would have been in the regular work as a member of the British Conference, but for the fact that their rules forbade them to receive married men.

“At twenty-five years of age he was married to Miss Hephzibah Mayfield.

“In 1846, he came to America, landing in New York with his wife and four little ones, a stranger in a strange

land, and poor at that. He soon became acquainted with New York city Methodists, who invited him to their homes and pulpits. In a short time he obtained work as a printer at the Methodist Book Rooms, then under the management of Mr. George Lane, where he labored about a year. But this busy, earnest man must preach a crucified Saviour on Sabbaths, even if he did set type on working days, and in less than a year, he had preached in every Methodist Episcopal Church in New York and Brooklyn but one, often aiding the pastors for weeks in extra services.

"In 1847, Brother Hewitt joined the Black River Conference on probation, and was stationed at Cicero, N. Y. The two following years he was stationed at Fulton, N. Y., where, in March, 1850, his wife died. Still being on trial, and not choosing to come up for examination at the conference of 1850, his connection with the conference ceased.

"In July of the same year, he was married to the widow of Frederick Fally, of Fulton, N. Y., and shortly afterward the family removed to their pleasant farm residence, one mile east of Fulton.

"In 1852, he supplied the pulpit of the Baptist Church of Fulton. In 1853, he performed a similar service for the Presbyterian Church of the same village. The two following years he preached at a couple of country appointments in the town of Volney.

"In 1859, Brother Hewitt joined the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and labored with that body four years, preaching mostly in Fulton. During three of these years, he was president of the Wesleyan Conference.

"About 1863, he became editor of a magazine entitled the *Religious Monthly*, a very excellent family periodical, which he continued for six years. He also published a periodical called the *Preacher's Companion*, which continued a year or two.

"In 1866, Brother Hewitt again joined the Black River Conference, and he was stationed at Ogdensburg for three years successively. His next appointments were: Adams, two years; Gouverneur, two years; and Mexico, two years.

"In the spring of 1875, his health having partially failed, he took a supernumerary relation, and returned to his old home in Fulton. The last four years of his life he has been on the superannuated list. Laid aside from active work, he became an attentive worshiper with the church he loved so well.

“He was ever present at service when health allowed. The last time he met with us in God’s house was at our quarterly meeting on the closing Sabbath of 1879, when, for the last time, he knelt with us and partook of the Lord’s supper.

“During his final illness of six weeks, which was caused by dropsy of the heart, his sufferings at times were severe, but he ever triumphed through Christ. When he first gave up hopes of his recovery, he began to look for the foundation for his hopes. He wanted to know of a certainty that his feet were then on the rock. His brief history seemed spread out before him. He saw himself a boy of sixteen with a cold lunch in his pocket in London, going out to preach in some little church, and tell of a Saviour’s love for dying men. He reviewed his years of apprenticeship, laboring all his working hours at his trade and all his Sabbath to save sinners, returning on Monday only to meet the gibes and sneers of his companions, who turned everything sacred into ridicule.

“He thought of his other years of labor in the Master’s vineyard. ‘Well,’ says he, ‘what of all that. There is nothing in all I have done to save me. I must have something more than that, or I cannot merit eternal life.’

“Then he thought of his failings and failures, and was sinking down in despair, when he remembered that Christ died for the chief of sinners, and he could not be more than chief. The words of Job then came to him, ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth, and because he liveth I shall live also.’ ‘Here,’ said he, ‘I will hang my hopes, here is solid ground’—and he felt he was on the rock.

“He then quoted part of the 319th hymn :

‘Lord, I believe thou hast prepared,
Unworthy though I be,
For me a blood-bought, free reward,
A golden harp for me.’

“One night during great suffering, he said Satan was filling his mind with all sorts of unholy thoughts, and that he could think of nothing to answer him, when his companion whispered in his ear, ‘When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee : When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon

thee.' The quoting of this beautiful promise seemed like a key unlocking the whole treasure-house of promise and comfort, and he went on repeating promise after promise until he was triumphant and Satan had fled.

"One said, 'You had better sleep now, you are so tired.'

"'No,' he said, he was afraid Satan would come while he was asleep and rob him of his victory.

"During his illness he rested alone on the merits of Christ who paid his debt.

"On one occasion while I was with him, I quoted, 'My peace I give unto you,' etc., when he immediately broke out, 'Bless the Lord, peace like a river.' On another occasion as I was about leaving him, he grasped my hand and held it for a long time firmly, and repeated,

'E'en now by faith we join our hands,
With those that went before
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands
On the eternal shore.'

"And so it was almost continually, his memory so richly stored with scriptures and hymns often poured out these rich effusions for his and other's comforts.

"Brother Hewitt was an extra good preacher; he was studious, talented, often eloquent, always forceful and never dull. His mind was well stored with knowledge, acquired mostly by himself, without the aid of schools, and he understood how to use what he knew with the best effect. His friends remember many interesting incidents of sermons preached by him when in his prime. He was eminently social, thus winning many friends where he preached.

"Thus at last a good man has gone from among us, but he is not dead.

"He had six children by his first wife, all of whom are now living.

"By his present wife he had four children, one of whom died in infancy; the other three are now living, and all have been present during his illness, kindly aiding him to bear his pains. He loved his children and companion very dearly, and could not too often speak of his happiness in having them about him during his last hours.

"His funeral was attended at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Fulton under the charge of the pastor, assisted by several ministerial brethren.

H. W. BENNETT."

Fulton, N. Y., Feb. 26, 1880.

The writer was well acquainted with Brother Hewitt. Indeed, no one could come in contact with him for any length of time without becoming acquainted with him. There was about him and in him what some call a soul of "magnetic influence," which even a stranger could not resist. He was a perfect gentleman in his manner, and yet perfectly approachable by all classes in society. He was a superior preacher, and one of the best readers of our beautiful hymns to which the writer ever listened. But he has gone, and

"Saved by the merit of his Lord,
 Glory and praise to Christ he gives;
 Yet still his merciful reward
 According to his work receives;
 And with the seed he sows below,
 His bliss eternally shall grow."

CHAPTER LXX.

REV. GEORGE SAWYER.

AT the period of the lamented death of Brother Sawyer, he was a member of the Central New York Conference, but having been born and educated and spent nearly all his active ministerial life within the bounds of the old Black River Conference, it seems proper that a chapter of this work should be devoted to his cherished memory, and for this reason, and our personal love and respect for the memory of Brother Sawyer, we add what follows:

George Sawyer was born in the town of Potsdam. His father's name was Mannasah Sawyer, and was one of the original members of the Methodist society in Potsdam. He was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and lived to a good old age. His mother was one of the sainted ones of earth, living and dying a happy yet suffering Christian woman. Among other children, they had two sons, John and George, both of whom in early life were converted to God, and became ministers of the gospel. Our first acquaint-

tance with the family was formed about the year 1840, or perhaps a little later, when, on invitation of Father Sawyer we visited their humble residence on the banks of the Racket River, in the lower part of the town of Potsdam, for the purpose of preaching a sermon, and holding a meeting for the special benefit of Mother Sawyer, who, for some years, had been a confirmed invalid, and where we enjoyed a refreshing season from the presence of the Lord. Prior to this time, however, we had made the acquaintance of the two sons, who were then blowing the gospel trumpet on the walls of Zion—with George as a member of the Black River Conference, and with John and his excellent wife at the hospitable home of Father Hugh Montgomery, in South Canton, whose daughter married Brother John Sawyer, and who made it their home with her parents—the author at the time being in the earliest years of his ministry and unmarried. From this circumstance, a friendship was formed which has continued thus far through life.

The particular date or circumstances of the conversion of George Sawyer, we have not learned, but it was while he was quite young. He joined the Methodist Church in Potsdam village, and was by the quarterly conference of the station licensed to preach, and also recommended to join the traveling connection.

He was admitted on trial in the Oneida Conference in 1835, and appointed to Sandy Creek, which, at the next conference of 1836, was found within the territory of the Black River Conference, and accordingly, he became identified with the latter body. In 1836, he was stationed at Fort Covington; 1837, received into full connection, and ordained deacon by Bishop Hedding, and appointed to Malone; 1838, re-appointed to Malone; 1839, ordained elder, and appointed to Ogdensburg; 1840, Ogdensburg; 1841, Sackets Harbor; 1842–3, Belleville; 1844–5, Pulaski; 1846, Rome; 1847–Lowville; 1849–50; Weedsport, 1851–2–3–4, presiding elder of Oswego District; 1855–6–7–8, presiding elder of Camde-

District ; 1859-60, Gilbert's Mills ; 1861, he was superannuated, and so remained till the time of his decease.

During the earlier years of his superannuation, he filled the office of United States assistant assessor for the division of the 22d congressional district, in which the important village of Fulton, in which he resided, was situated, he receiving his commission as such assessor from Hon. Salmon P. Chase, secretary of the treasury. He filled this office to the entire satisfaction of the government for about ten years, or as long as the office existed. The writer for the same length of time, filled the same office in the 5th division of the 17th congressional district, and whenever we happened to meet at our conference sessions, enjoyed some hearty conversations together, while we compared notes and related incidents of our official experience.

Soon after he was released from his internal revenue duties, he removed to Syracuse, where one of his sons was located, and settled down into a life of retirement, but not of inactivity, but continued to preach and maintain his character as a Christian and Christian minister to the close of life. As it regards his latter days and the closing scenes of his earthly toils, we cannot do better than to give the address of his friend and brother, Rev. J. D. Adams, D. D., at his funeral in Syracuse, February 27th, 1880, at which there was a large attendance of people, citizens and others, and at which there were appropriate services, suitable for such a solemn and mournful occasion :

"Brothers and friends, to-day we gather around the still form of our comrade. This quiet hour seems like the lull in the truce which contending hosts yield the one to the other amidst the storm of battle, that they each may bury their dead. Tenderly, with subdued spirit, we speak our sorrow, we lay our chaplet on this cold brow ; we lift our eyes in hope ; and then again into the conflict, only too soon to feel within our own hearts the piercings of the insatiate archer's shaft, whose unerring hand has laid low our brother.

"With the consciousness, grim though it be, that upon ourselves is trained the missile of death, we bow down to

lift up this fallen form of our brother in the strife, and bear it to the grave.

"It is human to consign this body 'dust to dust;' but it is brotherly to speak his virtues. In more senses than one, the lamented, who is before us, is a part of ourselves. Not in the outermost sense of oneness in race, nor in the more restricted meaning, as of citizenship; but in that nearer and more hallowed unity of church relation, was he, yea, *is* he, part of us; and to some of us, may I be permitted to say it, as a brother minister is he, in fibres which clasp closer and more consciously about the heart, part of ourselves. And nearer than even this, I forget not, is he to this broken circle, who this day bow under the shadow of this, to them, strange experience. His conflicts have been our conflicts, the cause to him and to us is one; his virtues, his heroism in the strife, his victories, as Elijah's mantle, fall on us, as from ourselves ascending they thus shall fall upon those whose uplifted eyes shall watch our ascension.

"As broken parts of that which is and must be one, we gather here, feeling ourselves shattered amidst the earthly, feeling ourselves blending in the heavenly and the immortal. As the rush of Niagara breaks down its own cataract, and makes it recede from itself, so time and death with their Titan hammers, chip down the firmest earthly associations which our past has built up.

"We get ominous glimpses of the fact that we are growing lonesome. Strains not far away of the song, which we shall weep sometimes as well as sing, fall upon our ears, 'My company before is gone.' The inevitable is at our heels. Like the wave that washes out the wake of the ship, the way which we have beaten out, down to this hour, survives not the stroke which made it, and we come to feel that we have no past, that only the *now* and the *to-come* is our own.

"Some of us, at least, cannot but be turned to look back upon years that are gone, as we look upon this immobile face, which in a few moments, we shall look at to see again on earth no more. If, to a stalwart faith, it is a weakness to yield in this presence to a retrospect, some of us must confess our weakness. If we must 'forget the steps already trod,' we cannot forget those who were with us as we trod them. Twenty-five stirring years give us an arc by which we can tell quite definitely what shall be, or at least, what shall attend the full circle of our life here upon the earth.

“Twenty-five years ago this coming spring, in the north-eastern portion of Oswego County, one day a strong, vigorous, active man drove up to my door. He was in the very bloom of manhood. It seemed as if it would be long before the labors of his robust activity and the load of years would be seriously felt by him. That man was my presiding elder; and the door at which he called was that of a young, immature preacher, who had just entered upon the strangeness and responsibility of the pastorate. Many excellent men in widely extended fields have sustained that relation to me since then, all of them men who have been to me brothers honored and loved, and who have been worthy of the trust which the church committed to them; but it will be permitted me to speak with special tenderness of my dear old friend, who has from that day been to me, in the interest each of us felt in the other, my presiding elder. With any position which it might be given me to earn in the esteem of my brethren yet to gain, this man was as considerate and kind in his relations to the boy as if he already had in his possession conference influence to wield. He was a brother, a father, not an autocrat; and a shrinking young preacher had a right to love him. And my cherished old presiding elder, I will lay this tribute on your marble brow! Seven years passed away, and it was mine to be the pastor of his family and of himself for three years in Fulton. Never shall I forget the faithful, most helpful friendship which he gave me during those years. They were years such as, may God grant, we never may have in this country again. Amidst their stern responsibilities, which I had to share, this man stood by me unflinchingly and, as well, manfully met his own responsibility. I am thankful to God that he let me have the privilege of receiving one of these worthy sons and his wife into the church, as some return for my old friend's kindness to me.

“What a group was that in the Black River Conference twenty-five years ago! But yesterday, I looked upon the faces taken at its last session, which was held in Malone. I shall not forget that chill spring day as we marched out in front of the church headed by Bishop Simpson. It was the work of one flash of sunlight that fixed those faces so that we now look upon them. But, alas, as I looked at the group, the older men in front, how the living faces of that front group have melted away; Reynolds, Baker, Dunning, Hap-

good, Salisbury and others, as Armstrong, Stone and many younger men in the rear are gone.

"In my Fulton pastorate with Brother Sawyer, there were associated with me, in one way and another, Dunning and Hewitt and Vandercook. A week or two ago, Hewitt was borne to his grave. The others died some years ago. I say it not at the expense of other noble conferences, when I say, grand old conference was that Black River Conference! It was bright when it was ours, and its memory grows more hallowed as the date of its existence recedes. Among the active men whose presence was felt in its session at Weedsport, a quarter of a century ago, was our brother, was Shepherd, was Mattison, Tuller, Justin, Alden and others, some of whom I have already named, and some who yet remain whose heads have grown gray, and Bishop Janes was there. In the Black River Conference was our brother's active ministry as a conference preacher, except his first year, which was in the Oneida Conference. A large portion of its prominent pastorates he served. Eight years was he a presiding elder. For at least twenty-five years he did effective service as a preacher of the gospel. He was a fine preacher, attractive in his person, pleasing and forcible in his delivery, his voice commanding and magnetic, his style easy. Decided in his convictions, thoroughly loyal to the doctrines of the Bible, he could not but hold the attention and deeply impress the people. He was manly. He was a genuine Christian gentleman. This was always characteristic of him, but it was interesting to see how the gentleman displayed itself when his body was a mere wreck and when his polite courtesy cost him such physical distress. The last words I heard him speak were spoken when aroused from his stupor, and the urbanity of the man was so remarkably evident that one could not but say, The gentleman is in his very soul. His perceptions were quick, and his judgment sound. He was emphatically an intelligent man.

"In the Methodist Episcopal Church, the years of effective relation to the conference is not the only, nor perhaps the severest test of the genuineness of the minister. The man who can pass through the years of his necessary superannuation, and be a help rather than a burden to the church where he lives, maintain an unblemished life, gracefully and cheerfully concede to the pastor the full measure of his position and do loyal service as if only a layman, while yet giv-

ing the hearty sympathy of a brother minister, gives a test of consecration to the cause of Christ, not less real, nor less desirable, than the valiant activities of his effective relation to his conference. I can say by the coffin of this aged minister of Jesus Christ, that twice having been his pastor during his superannuation, he, to the extent of my knowledge of him, has endured this test so trying to a Methodist preacher, and without a flaw. When it seemed best for him to retire from the effective ranks, like a man he went to work to earn his own support. And in his business life, he commanded and received the confidence of honorable and influential men. It is not always that men who have occupied public position, and who have been looked up to and received honor, and perhaps flattery, can grow old gracefully. They see themselves displaced by younger men. They have not quite reached the points of the ambition of their earlier years. And some men, under these circumstances, come to be censorious, if not bitter, as they grow old. They make themselves unlovable and their very presence painful. They do not seem to be able to give honor to whom honor is due if it follows down on their own path. Their tongue has an acid touch which etches some disqualification upon every character which seems to occupy a place which they think they ought to have occupied. What an unfortunate ageing is this! What a happy remove was our brother from this! How genial his spirit while he grew old; how little of censure for his brethren. He was not a retailer of the faults of his brethren. A most admirable conversationalist, having fine descriptive power, chaste humor, always refined and so genial, one came away from converse with him with the feeling as if he had basked for an hour in grateful sunshine. His work in the church as a preacher of the gospel and in the narrower sphere of his superannuation is not all that should be spoken of him.

“For a few years past, the slur of other days, which was cast upon the children of ministers, has been shamed into silence before the noble men and women who have taken front rank in the church and in social responsibilities, who are the sons and daughters of preachers of the gospel. And still they are coming forward to honor the homes which trained them, as well as to adorn the places which they are winning. I need not say in this presence that our brother was not the least in this blessed recompense which has re-

turned to so many ministers' homes. Not smallest of honors should be given to the man, who, under God, gives to the church and to society such sons.

"Our brother has been a great sufferer. He has felt the chastening which God giveth his sons. Several ministerial brethren as well as myself have visited him during his long illness, and prayed with him. In one of these visits, before he was confined to his bed, I approached him on the subject of the fatal termination of his sickness. With a smile characteristic of him, while the tears started in his eyes, he assured me in substance that he had not preached the truths of the gospel so many years to find them failing him now. When praying with him, most earnest were his responses to the prayers. Only a few days before his death, I asked him concerning his prospects, and he told me he had no reason to complain. It was not characteristic of him to be demonstrative as to his own experience, but those who knew him intimately had reason to feel that his heart was stayed on God. He was much displeased with speculations on the part of Christian ministers which tended to weaken the doctrines of the gospel. In one of my conversations with him, a few months ago, he expressed almost indignation over some recent theories, which he had listened to, which seem to ratify into very thin substance the resurrection.

"That brisk, robust man, whose step was firm and quick, imprinted on my memory twenty-five years ago; alas, is this pale, emaciate form all that remains to us of him? Farewell, dear old friend, farewell! With some of us it will not be a long farewell. We shall miss you, but we cannot forget. Yes, we shall think of him, not as this body is now; but we shall think of him at his best, when he moved vigorously among men. And the memory of this man shall drop a pleasurable radiance upon us when we think of him. Think of him? Not always with our face toward what has been! Nay, we turn us about and look upward and forward to where he is. Adieu, to the retrospect! All hail, the prospect! He is not here; for he is risen. Brother ministers, we will bury our old comrade; we will not march to his grave with beat of muffled drum, but we will go with the sweet evangel whispering to us from the skies, 'The Resurrection and the Life.' We will feel the rock beneath our own feet which we have sought to persuade others to build upon. With measured intervals, and with inevitable cer-



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tainty, heaven's roll-call decimates our ranks. With us is the minority—heaven's gains outnumber us. Who next? May he fall grasping victory! My own congregation this week buries two valuable, influential men—one a highly esteemed lawyer, the other, a beloved minister. May we be admonished. May we be inspired by the stainless memories of these men. In an especial sense, I may speak to the bereft group as a brother. Yet upon the sacredness of your grief I will not intrude. You have a right to be left unvexed to its quiet, to its sorrow, and to its hope. You profess the Christian's faith. The source of its consolation is not unfamiliar to you. It does not fail you now. This esteemed woman, who has known the cares, the hopes, the joys of a minister's life, will be the cherished charge of devoted children. Happy for her, that the widowed life into which she is now thrust has not even a feather's weight of care added to her burden, in anxiety for her children. Strong arms of manly, worthy sons will help this stricken woman in the few steps she may yet take through the valley. And, best of all, unto her is the promise of the widow's God. May the new thought of heaven which has come to you with this translation so beguile your thoughts away to your loved one there as to make the vacant places of your loss seem but shadow spots of wafted clouds flitting beneath a full-orbed sun."

CHAPTER LXXI.

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It causes a feeling of sadness in the breasts of even good people when they see the destruction caused by death in thinning the ranks of those we have learned to love and esteem for many long years, and especially do ministers of the gospel feel sad when one of their fellow-laborers is stricken down by death's sickle, and consigned to the grave—one with whom they have stood side by side on the ramparts of Zion, and who have often met the foe together, and gained it may be many a bloodless yet glorious victory. And while we all know that our loss is their eternal gain, we nevertheless feel sad, not for them, but for ourselves, in that our

ranks are being broken, and our associations disturbed by the grim destroyer. As the soldier on the battle-field sees his comrades falling around him by the missiles of the foe, while he relaxes none of his efforts to conquer, or loses any of his patriotism or heroism, he cannot but feel sad to see his fellow-soldiers stricken down in death. In the latter case, the feeling of depression is not always obviated by the assurance that death to the victim "is but the gate to endless joy," but in the former, thanks to the consoling influences of our holy religion, the Christian has learned to sing

"Thus star by star declines till all are passed away,
As morning high, and higher shines to pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
They hide themselves in heaven's own light."

Perhaps the author can prepare no more acceptable tribute to the memory of our dear Brother Turney than to present the following condensed narrative written by our excellent brother, Rev. Harlow Skeel. It is short but comprehensive, and contains nearly all the items of information Brother Turney's friends would desire to see retained in book form. We will simply say in passing that we knew our deceased brother for years, and had learned to love him dearly as a Christian brother and Christian minister, and when the news of his death reached us, we too had feelings of sadness come over us, because, like Paul, we sorrowed the most, "because "we should see his face no more" on the shores of time :

Rev. Isaac Turney.

"Rev. Isaac Turney, of the Northern New York Conference, died at his residence in Constantia, Oswego County, N. Y., March 5; 1880, aged 69 years, 11 months and 23 days.

"He was born in Weston, (now Easton), Fairfield County, Conn., March 13, 1810, and passed his early years in this state. His parents were members of the Baptist Church; and, converted at the age of twelve, he united with them, and remained in that communion—where two of his older brothers became ministers—until March 23, 1834, when, by his request, he received a letter of dismissal signed by David Silkman, church clerk, and the next Sabbath joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, to which he ever insisted

he belonged by spiritual birth. September 6, 1837, he was married to Miss Harriet Thorp, who survives him, and the next spring removed to Mexico, Oswego County, N. Y.

"Soon after uniting with the church, he was made class-leader, and October 23, 1838, his first exhorter's license, signed by the now sainted Squire Chase, was given him. This was renewed the two following years, and July 10, 1841, he was licensed by the Mexicoville and Colosse Quarterly Conference as local preacher, George Gary presiding elder.

"In 1842, he joined the Black River Conference, and was stationed on the Rose Circuit, then embracing the present charges of Rose, Butler, Savannah, Red Creek, and, I think, other outside appointments. At the session of the conference in Potsdam, he was ordained deacon by Bishop L. Hamline, Aug 4, 1844, and his ordination as elder followed in the disciplinary order of time.

"The subsequent charges he served, in the thirty-seven years of his ministry, were Canton, Stockholm, Carthage, Cleveland, Central Square, Salina, Floyd, Fairfield, Scriba, Wolcott, Red Creek, Lysander, New Haven, Gilbert's Mills, Florence, Boonville, Pamela, Three Mile Bay, Constantia and Lowville. Two years of this time he was supernumerary, and, at its last session, the conference, at his own request, granted him a superannuated relation, and he settled at Constantia, where he had secured a pleasant home, and where, in the hearts of the people, he had the warmest place. The charge being left with only nominal supply, greatly to its delight, he interested himself in its welfare, preaching regularly, attending social services, and doing much pastoral work, showing in this work the most genial spirit. By his beneficence and that of his wife, a new bell was presented to the church, and an insurance effected on the building. For the spiritual welfare of the people he had the greatest concern, and saw, through his own, and the labors of the evangelists, Waller and Larabee, a most gracious revival and ingathering. In the midst of his work and in the pulpit, February 15, while preaching, he was stricken with paralysis, and taking his seat, said, 'The choir will sing while I rest.' The choir sang, and the brethren bore him from a tearful congregation to his home. He seemed somewhat to recover, but died March 5, 1880, sitting in his chair, without a struggle, and in great peace. At the first attack, he foresaw the

result, and most deliberately prepared for it—giving directions to his wife, also to his brethren, and inviting sinners to the Saviour,—regretting much that he could not finish the work of the conference year for the church.

“In the church, which was beautifully draped, the funeral services were held March 7, at 2 P. M., the writer using II Tim., iv, 6-8. Revs. McCarthy, of the Presbyterian Church, and E. Arnold and D. Marvin, Jr., of the Northern New York Conference, being present, and his remains were deposited in the cemetery at Bernhard’s Bay, to await the resurrection morning.

“Of the traits of this minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, we may say, he was a good reader of human nature, and had more than ordinary financial ability. Methodical and prompt in all matters of business, quiet and entirely unassuming in manner, he oftener thought than spoke, and hence the oftener spoke to purpose. In his path the parsonages and churches of the people he served, showed his tact and skill in the line of improvement and construction. As a preacher, the merely emotional and sensational did not by any means predominate in his ministrations, but rather the experimental and practical, as growing out of sound doctrine, unwavering faith, and cheerful observance of Christian duty.

“He loved the church, and this love was in vigorous and beautiful growth until he ‘ceased at once to work and live.’ He will be greatly missed and mourned by the church he served, and at the annual conference gathering, the place of him, who for thirty-seven years never failed to greet the ‘ministerial bands’ who gather on that occasion, will be vacant. Sorrowfully we are made to say, he was the fifth minister who has died on Oswego District this conference year, and as the ranks of our veterans are being thus sadly thinned, we cannot, even in our tears, wish these ‘shocks’ of God’s ripened corn brought back again to this realm of storm and frost. May the blessed Lord make us ready as they for his ‘harvest home.’

H. SKEEL.”

Pulaski, March 10, 1880.

